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[GIRLING OBTAINS AN INTERVIEW WITH LADY BRANDON.]

THE BONDAGE OF BRANDON.

CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM GIRLING, was totally unable to withstand the tremendous onslaught of the pirate. Altogether ignorant of those scientific acquirements, by the exercise of which, a strong man may be rendered powerless, he was helpless as a child in the hands of his powerful antagonist, who caught him in an iron grasp, and bent his neck over his extended arm with a cracking noise, indicative of speedy dislocation.

Contrary to the general expectation, the pirate chief at this juncture interposed the weight of his authority. Seeing that the honour of his subordinate had been vindicated, he ordered him in a loud voice to desist and liberate his now thoroughly subdued opponent.

With a reluctant growl he did so, and Girling lay upon the ground breathless and in pain.

"He won't want to go out to-night after your delicate attentions," said his superior; "carry him upstairs and lay him outside his door."

The confusion which had formerly reigned ceased directly the disturbance was quelled, and one of the men taking up Girling, did as he had been told, depositing his burden on the floor of the topmost landing.

In this way, Girling's acquaintance with the river pirates ceased for a time, although he was destined to renew his intimacy with them again at no distant period, when, without intending to do so, they were the means of rendering him some service.

Hearing the noise of the pirate's footsteps, Mary Girling issued from the room to ascertain the cause. She was much terrified at perceiving what she took to be the inanimate body of her husband. With some exertion and no little difficulty, she succeeded in drawing him inside, when she scattered a few drops of water over his face, anxiously waiting the result of the simple but efficacious remedy. Her solicitude was rewarded, by re-animation on his part; he staggered to his feet, and as soon as he could speak, told her what

had happened to him. She congratulated him upon his escape, and they agreed to leave so dangerous a locality as early as they could next morning.

When day broke, Girling found himself very sore from the bruises he had received in his contest with the pirate, but he did not allow anything to stand between himself and the resolution he had formed. He fancied that he could see the glimmering of some good fortune through the hazy mystery which enveloped the child he had so strangely rescued the evening before. He made up his mind to devote all the time he had at his disposal to the discovery of the lady who had entrusted to him the execution of so villainous a mission. He made his way, after a hasty breakfast, to the West End, and with all despatch proceeded to explore the different streets. He passed the best part of the day in this difficult and uninteresting occupation. He met with no success. He could recognize no land-mark. He was all at sea and beginning to be despondent, when, as he was standing at a corner of a street, looking up at the window of a house on the opposite side of the way, a handsome chocolate-coloured carriage dashed past. His eyes fell with a curious expression upon the occupant of it. He started as if some one had filled his boots with molten lead, and he had inadvertently stepped into the liquid metal. The lady who had spoken to him in the housekeeper's room in the unknown house was seated in that carriage, which was quickly receding from his sight. With the light of a firm desperation in his eyes, he ran swiftly after the aristocratic vehicle. The people on the pavement elbowed and pushed him about, but he kept on his way. The carriage was his pole-star, and he knew that if he lost it his only chance slipped away from him. He would be like a man in the middle of a pathless plain, who is ignorant of the position of the stellar groups, and has no compass to guide him. Through streets and through squares the object he was chasing led him. He steadily persevered. After it had compelled him to run for nearly a quarter of an hour, it drew up before a handsomely-built house in one of those quiet but patrician streets south of Belgrave Square. He arrested his progress and leant against the railings for

support. He was out of breath, owing to the pace at which he had been travelling. A beplushed and powdered footman descended from the box and opened the door of the carriage. The lady alighted and passed into the house. The hall-porter held the door open for the footman, who soon followed his mistress with her card-basket and one or two purchases she had made during her drive. Then the door was closed, and William Girling remained gazing at the exterior of the house, to see if it in any way corresponded with the idea he entertained of the one he had been asked to enter the night before. He was strongly of opinion that it did. If any lingering doubt had existed in his mind it would have been dissipated when the chocolate-coloured carriage moved away at a slow pace, probably in the direction of the stable. If the lady had merely been paying a visit she would have kept the carriage waiting; so, believing now that he was upon the right scent, William Girling descended the area steps with as much courage as he could summon up. He knocked at the door and waited with a palpitating heart. He was, of course, ignorant of the lady's name, and did not know whom to ask for. He trusted, as many a man has done before him, to the chapter of accidents. A servant, whose face he did not recollect having seen on the occasion of his former visit to the mansion, opened the door and demanded his business.

"Will you tell me, please, who lives here?" he said, doing all he could to prevent stammering and losing his self-possession, for he might have come to the wrong house, after all.

"What do you want to know for?"

"You see, I have a message to deliver, and I can't quite remember the name."

"Was it Wilcox?" asked the servant.

There was a mischievous twinkle in the girl's eye as she spoke, but it was not remarked by William Girling. He clung to Wilcox as a drowning man, half-submerged, to a straw.

"I won't say that it was not," he replied.

"Oh! then it wasn't here," was the answer.

The girl made as if she would shut the door in his face when she had brought this colloquy to an abrupt

and; but Girling inserted his foot in a dexterous manner, so as to prevent it from closing.

"Now, what is it you do want?" cried the servant.

"You've come wrong!"

"How do you know?"

"Because you have!"

Girling's appearance, at that moment, was not exactly calculated to inspire respect in the feminine mind. He was hot, dusty, and what is called travel-stained. Seeing that he stood a very poor chance of gaining admittance from the obdurate abigail before him, his superior sense advised him to have recourse to diplomacy.

"Well, my dear," he said, "you needn't be so cross. Don't lose your temper over nothing."

"I don't want to," she replied, a little modified at being addressed as "My dear."

"I dare say I have made a mistake in the house; but if you were a poor fellow in my position, wouldn't you like to make sure about it before you went away? I'm very sorry to give you any trouble, but I shall get into disgrace when I go home, if I don't deliver my message. My employer doesn't make excuses for defective memories."

"What do you want to know?" asked the girl, pleased at the respectful tone in which Girling spoke to her.

"Well, I'll tell you," he said.

"Make haste, then—my time's valuable!"

"I'll be as quick as I can," rejoined Girling. "If you tell me the name of the lady who lives here, perhaps I shall call the name I want to mind."

"It's Lady Brandon!" said the servant.

"Brandon!" repeated Girling. "Thank you kindly for your information. Perhaps I am wrong after all. I think I'll go back and see."

"Brandon!" he echoed to himself, as the girl shut the door, without wishing him "good-bye" or "good day."

As he went up the steps, he continued:

"The cambic wrapper, in which the child was laid, was marked with a 'B'. This must be the house, and I have at last discovered the lady I am in search of."

Carefully noticing the number of the house and the name of the street, he wandered about in search of a barber's shop, where, for a penny or twopence, he would be allowed the privilege of washing his hands and face, and making himself look a little more respectable than he did at present. He was about to visit a lady of rank, and he was at a loss to imagine how she would receive him. He was afraid that her manner to him would be anything but favourable. In that case he would have to assume a threatening demeanour, and answer her by showing her that he was in possession of her secret, and neither without the will or the power to make use of it in any way which should prove most beneficial to his individual interests. He saw a source of income and of profit from the fears of Lady Brandon, and he was in such a precarious and desperate position that he could not afford to throw up the chance because he possessed a few gentlemanly scruples. These he cast to the winds, and laughed at himself for being foolish enough to entertain them for a moment. Lady Brandon, if it were indeed she who had been guilty of the hideous crime of abandoning her tender offspring, deserved all the retributive justice that he could compress into his own proper person, and, if the truth is to be told, a great deal more. William Girling constituted the civil tribunal, as it were, before which she was to be arraigned, in opposition to the criminal, which had as yet nothing to do with her. He wondered whether she was really a cruel and bad-hearted woman—one of those beautiful fiends who, from their coldness, resemble marble; and from the sway and license they give their bad and evil passions, to the utter and complete extinction of the good, are fashioned after the manner of demons. So fair, so debonair, and so worshipful, if you are only casually acquainted with them, but terrible pythonesses if you happen to cross their paths, stand in their way, or otherwise offend them. Was she one of these? It required time to solve that question, although the presumption was strongly in favour of an affirmative reply. When he again made his appearance before the house, his acquaintance with which had opened a new epoch in his career, he knocked at the front door, and boldly demanded an interview with Lady Brandon. The man-servant who had appeared in obedience to his summons scanned him from head to foot before he made any reply to his demand. It was now about two hours after mid-day—that is to say, it was two o'clock. The footman was by no means satisfied with his scrutiny, and he asked what Girling's business was, and if no one else would do as well.

Girling replied emphatically, that his business was with her ladyship, and that he must positively see her. On hearing this, and somewhat impressed by his decisive way of speaking, the footman conducted Girling into a small room on the ground floor, and

having ushered him in asked for his name; he did not flatter him so far as to proffer a request for his card. Girling exclaimed:

"Be good enough to tell her ladyship that the person who carried a sack for her wishes to speak to her."

Girling was left alone for some time. The room in which he was standing was a sort of occasional one, kept on purpose for those emergencies of which his visit was one. It was too good for a messenger, but not good enough for a guest. The carpet was the commonest Kidderminster, the pictures on the walls old-fashioned prints in maple wood frames, whilst the rest of the furniture was antiquated but good. The servant returned with a request that Girling would follow him; he did so without a word. The hall was divided by an immense curtain, which hung between two pillars, which were made in imitation of jasper. Parting this in the middle, the footman admitted Girling to the foot of a spacious staircase, of about the same dimensions as that at Buckingham Palace. Statues stood on pedestals in various places, and flower-girls supporting baskets filled with the choicest specimens of the art of the floriculturist, were to be met with here and there. The stair-covering was soft and yielding, the windows which admitted light to the hall, were filled with the most elaborate and expensive stained glass, principally in imitation of those famous sacred subjects in the celebrated cathedral of Milan. A door, with the panels painted white and gold, gave admittance to a long and splendidly furnished drawing-room. There were two fireplaces in it, in each of which a fire was burning. Stands of flowers of the most varied and costly description stood before each of the five windows, sending forth a perfume that was as intoxicating and luxurious as the ineffable beauty of their charming possessor. There could be no doubt about my lady's wealth.

The footman exclaimed, "The man your ladyship wished to see;" and retired in the decorous fashion of a well-bred menial who has lived in good families—not a vestige of curiosity displayed upon his impassive countenance—not an atom of intelligence peeping out from his unintellectual optics.

For a moment Girling could not discern in what part of the room Lady Brandon was. He looked up at the chandelier, which was a most wonderful and skilful combination of large and small particles of cut glass, curiously shaped by the cunning hand of a ready artificer. There was something very fairy-like about her ladyship, but it was slightly insane to think that he would find her hidden away in the intricate folds of so vitreous and fragile an habitation.

A voice as dulcissant as that of Hebe or the tones which flowed from the lute of Apollo fell upon his ears. It proceeded from an alcove or recess, which had been built up entirely of flowers and shrubs. It was situated at the end of the room. In this floral retreat Lady Brandon resembled one of those fanciful creations of the heathen poets, called dryads. No wood nymph could have been more strikingly beautiful. She had merely told Girling to approach her. He did so, inspired with an involuntary respect, which sprang from the novelty of the associations and the unwonted splendour of the surroundings. When he came close to her he felt an awkward sort of clownishness, which arose from his knowledge that he was badly dressed. He had the ideas of a person in a much higher rank of life than that in which he was, and it annoyed him to be unable to gratify the promptings and the dictates of what could only be hereditary vanity and innate pride.

Her ladyship was carelessly occupied in trailing the tender tendrils of a canariensis creeper around the stem of a standard rose, and along a piece of string, which had been prepared for its clinging embrace. She wore a pair of close-fitting gloves, and a string of pearls fell over her snowy neck. Her dress was of light blue silk, and her fair hair fell in rippling waves into a slenderly constructed net, whose flimsy folds resembled the delicate fibres of a spider's web.

"What is it you want me for?" she said, in her musical voice; "and what did you say about a sack?" she added, turning her lustrous blue eyes full upon him. Those eyes dazzled with their glance full of meaning, replete with expression, and sparkling with intelligence.

Fighting against the enchantment of her manner, William Girling nerved himself for an encounter with a woman whom he was persuaded was as clever as she was lovely. Although her manner was soft and gentle, he could tell instinctively that she was a worthy antagonist for a man who prided himself upon his subtlety, and plumed himself upon his ability and skill. Like a beautiful and glittering serpent, there were fangs within, and deep down in the polished ivory were bags of venomous poison.

"Your ladyship cannot have forgotten last night," he ventured to remark.

"Last night!" she repeated, with an affectation of

innocence and of blank amazement blended cleverly together.

"About eight o'clock, I think it was," continued Girling, "a servant called me in, and I was afterwards asked to carry a sack. When I asked where, I was given a piece of paper, which I was to read when I reached the nearest gate leading into Hyde Park. I did so, and my directions were to throw the sack into the Serpentine."

If William Girling had watched Lady Brandon closely he would have detected a shade of anxiety stealing over her pretty face. She was eagerly listening for him to continue his recital; but she did her best to keep down and smother any evidence of curiosity. The slightest failing in this respect, the smallest manifestation of weakness, would have given her visitor undoubted advantage over her. Turning to him with an easy movement, and raising her eyebrows with well-bred surprise, her ladyship said, in the self-possessed voice which always characterized her:

"Your story is strange, but it is interesting. In what way it can affect me I am at a loss to imagine; but I will fancy that I am a child again, and that I am listening to an Arabian tale. I like to be amused, do you know? I am afraid I am a baby."

She sat down upon a seat in her rustic bowser, and invited him to take a chair, which he refused to do. While standing he could observe and scrutinize her more closely. When she had arranged her dress to her satisfaction, and was comfortably seated, she said, "Pray go on; I am listening."

William Girling proceeded at her ladyship's request.

"On my way through the park," he said, "I felt that I should not be doing right if I were to execute the commands that had been given me without I took the precaution of investigating the contents of the bag. If it contained nothing but rubbish, I would cheerfully plunge it beneath the water; but if, as I more than suspected, it was filled with something which had once been instinct with the breath of life—"

"What do you say?" cried Lady Brandon, forgetting her self-possession, and exhibiting a vulgar curiosity.

"I am merely telling your ladyship what my suspicions were."

"Yes," she replied; "I forgot that I was listening to your entertaining little fiction; go on."

"I acted as my conscience dictated, and opened the sack. In it, I found the body of a living child. Chloroform had been administered to it, but happily without success. The dose was either not sufficient, or the constitution of the child stronger than those who wished to kill it were willing to believe."

"Kill it!" she said, with traces of anger upon her cheeks. "Do you know what you are saying?" But almost instantly correcting herself, she said, "How stupid I am! I forgot that your tale is nothing to me."

"The child revived," resumed Girling, without taking any notice of the interruption, "and I have it now at home. My wife is nursing it, and I have called upon you, Lady Brandon, to know what to do with the child."

"He did not say *your* child, because he was afraid to go so far. He dreaded lest what he considered such a home-stroke might break off negotiations between them."

"Do with the child!" she exclaimed, with a sweet sounding laugh. "How should I be able to tell you? Why do you ask me?"

"Because, my lady, you were the person who gave me the child."

"I—I give you the child! I beg you will not say that again," she cried, with great vehemence. "I have been very kind and considerate in listening to you so far as I have, I think; but you must allow me to remind you that I am in my own house, and although I am alone, I am not quite defenceless. You must not insult me—if you do so, it will not be with impunity."

"What am I to understand, your ladyship?" asked William Girling.

"Only this," she replied, with enviable equanimity, such as might arise from one of two causes; "that I never saw you before in my life; that your story is quite unintelligible to me; and that in my opinion you have mistaken me for somebody else."

"No, my lady; I have not done that."

"You contradict me?"

"I hope not rudely," he replied.

"Ah!" said her ladyship, shrugging her slender shoulders, "one must make allowances for some people."

Her equanimity might have arisen from this cause. Supposing her to be a mother, she would have felt a natural compunction which it would have been impossible to repress when she reflected that her child had perished through her inhumanity. When she heard that the child was not dead, but that it had found a home amongst poor people who would probably take

care of it, a load was taken off her mind, and she was rejoiced to find that she had not been guilty of a hideous sin. This is only supposition. Her quietude of manner might have proceeded with equal reason from a consciousness of rectitude. But the hearts of some people are as difficult to read as an ill-written manuscript of the fourteenth century, or a will at Doctors' Commons, or the archives of some honourable society which has existed since time began.

"I hope you will excuse me if I am positive, or if I think myself so," said Girling. "Your features are indelibly impressed upon my mind, and I am confident that I have not made a mistake. I remember everything as if it had happened a moment ago. The room, yourself, your servant, the sack, the money you gave me—nothing has escaped me in so short a time."

"My good man," said Lady Brandon, "I tell you that you are in error—very much in error. That answer must satisfy you."

"But it cannot, my lady. Am I to keep and maintain, and clothe the child for nothing? You cannot compel me to do so!"

"Why will you confound me with somebody else?" she said. "I cannot pay for other people's children. Besides that, even if I were charitably inclined, how do I know that you are not an impostor? I do not wish intentionally to hurt your feelings; but you have made assertions against me. It is within the bounds of possibility that you may wish to extort money from me."

"Yes, I do!" replied William Girling boldly; "but not on grounds that are indefensible. I wish to extort money from you, because I am poor, and because I know your secret, and consequently have a claim upon you."

"Or, you think that you have!" she exclaimed. "Why will you not take my word for it, that you are labouring under a delusion?"

"I think I am not, Lady Brandon, and I ask you what you intend to do?"

"Nothing!" she replied. "You allege something in a vague way. You are absolutely without proof, and I defy you!"

Lady Brandon spoke firmly now.

Her feverish air and baby manner wore off, and she gave Girling just a glimpse of her true character.

"Then I shall be reluctantly compelled to take steps, which will necessitate a compromise with me, or exposure of your shameful and most discreditable transaction," said Girling.

He was determined that her ladyship should not get the better of him in the little game they were playing together. Why, he held all the trumps in his hand, and was he to be defeated? Certainly not. At least if he had it in his power to prevent so disastrous a consummation.

"Take what steps you like," replied Lady Brandon.

"You tell me to do so?"

"I do."

"In that case I wish you good morning," answered William Girling.

He made an inclination of the head which was intended as a bow, and was preparing to leave the room, when Lady Brandon exclaimed in an agitated voice, "Stop."

He turned round, and they stood facing one another again.

CHAPTER IV.

Is there no place
Left for repentance? None for pardon left?
None left but by submission, and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame.

Milton.

It was a fair question for debate whether Lady Brandon was not a match for William Girling. She was a perfect mistress of the art of verbal fencing.

There was something so determined and resolute in Girling's manner, that her ladyship appeared intimidated, and apprehensive of untoward events occurring which would upset all her pre-arranged plans and annihilate her calculations.

Girling saw that his aristocratic antagonist was turning various matters over in her patrician mind, and he waited quietly for her to continue a conversation that was assuming an absorbing interest in his eyes.

It was apparent to Lady Brandon that Girling, with his fox-like cunning and his pertinacious industry, would follow up the clue of which he held possession, until he ultimately discovered everything.

Would it not be better for her to make a friend than an enemy of him?

This was the question that she was considering.

For a brief space, her face assumed a stony expression; but this gradually wore away, and her habitual self-possession, which had only momentarily deserted her, returned with all its accustomed dignity.

Regarding Girling with her fascinating eyes, she exclaimed, in her silvery, tinkling voice:

"Can we not make terms?"

"I shall be glad to do so," he replied. "I proposed that we should do so in the first instance. If your ladyship will so far tax your memory, you will call the fact to mind. I am always averse to hostility, when a matter is susceptible of amicable arrangement."

"You want money, do you not?" she asked.

He replied in the affirmative.

Lady Brandon rose and walked to a table, on which stood a magnificent writing-desk, upon the top of which was depicted some fairy being, seated in a chariot drawn by two gorgeous peacocks.

Here, she wrote something; and, coming back to Girling, showed him a cheque for one hundred pounds.

He stretched out his hand to take it, but she rapidly withdrew it. He had not entitled himself to it as yet.

He could scarcely conceal his mortification. He had all the feelings of an extensive speculator, who sees a fortune slipping from his eager grasp.

"Not yet," she said, with a smile. "I have something to say to you first. Is this sufficient to dissipate the silly ideas you have been cherishing? Will it drive away all insane visions of sacks and babies, and nonsensical things of a similar description? If so, take it! Try a change of air. It may improve your health. A change of climate might be beneficial to you. America is a fine country—New York a teeming city. To an enterprising man like yourself, it offers an unbounded field."

Girling made no reply. He seemed pre-occupied. Her ladyship had to ask him for a reply to her remarks before he opened his mouth. Then he said:

"A hundred pounds is a large sum, and I accept your ladyship's offer."

"You do?" she exclaimed, joyfully. "Take the cheque, then, and do not forget what I told you. Leave England. You will never succeed here. Good morning."

Lady Brandon repeated her valedictory remark, for William Girling showed no symptoms of taking his departure. On the contrary, he folded up the draft and placed it in his waistcoat pocket. When satisfied that it was in safe custody, he sat down upon a chair and crossed his legs, fixing his glance upon her ladyship's perplexed countenance.

"What do you mean?" she said. "Why do you not go?"

"Because, my lady, our conversation is not yet over. In point of fact, it is only just beginning. Sit down again in your sylvan retreat. It becomes you so well that it is a pity you should be absent from its leafy shade."

Flashing an indignant look upon him, Lady Brandon refused to comply with his demand. In no measured terms she told him to leave her house. Girling smiled in a somewhat sardonic manner, and weighing his words and their probable effect as he uttered them, said emphatically:

"Just be good enough to listen to me, Lady Brandon. It is useless for you to deny your complicity in the attempt to deprive an innocent infant of its life. Under heaven, I was the humble instrument through whom your iniquitous design was frustrated. Whether you were the tool of others, or whether you were the original plotter of a discreditable and criminal offence, I do not pretend to say. You have foolishly given me money. If you do not fear me, why should you bribe me? If your ladyship does not instantly fully unburden your mind to me, and make a full confession of this mysterious affair, I shall have no course open to me but to lay the whole case before the proper tribunal, the authorities of which will know how to thoroughly sift it and unravel it to its very foundations. Now, clearly understand me. You are in my power—wholly, solely, and inextricably. Your own sense will compel you to admit the fact. Such being the case, you have no option but to confess everything. It is necessary that I should know all, so that my future movements may be guided by the information."

The effect of this speech upon Lady Brandon was marked and striking. She tottered into a seat and gasped for breath. Her haughty demeanour abandoned her, and her manner was suppliant and submissive.

"What if I were to deny everything?" she said, in a tremulous voice.

"Then," replied Girling, "I should produce the child, and I should put into court, in evidence of the truth of my statement, the draft for a hundred pounds which bears your signature. Those facts would excite attention, and some of your friends would give additional information which would elucidate the mystery and dispel the mists which at present surround the infant."

"What do you wish me to do?" demanded the humiliated lady, whose rank did not avail her against the penetration and detective talent of William Girling.

"What I have previously intimated to you," he replied. "Let me know at once everything con-

nected with the child you endeavoured to destroy. You may as well tell me now, because you will be compelled to do so sooner or later."

Lady Brandon cast her eyes upon the ground, and with a preliminary sigh, in a low voice said:

"I am very unhappy. You have destroyed my peace of mind for ever; but as I can see that we must be friends, I will tell you what you wish to know. The child that you have at your house is the offspring of my brother's wife. If it lives it will become Earl of Brandon. I am desirous of preserving the title and estates for any child that may come from my branch of the house. For if the earl dies without what the lawyers call issue, my son, if I should marry, will be the heir-at-law of my brother. The Countess of Brandon is in delicate health, and the loss of her child will probably prey upon her mind. Must I go on?"

"I think I understand," replied Girling. "You wished to kill your brother's child because you were ambitious—because you are so now, for ambition is not a passion easily extinguished. Is it not so?"

Lady Brandon assented.

"I have nothing further to say to your ladyship at present," resumed Girling. "I shall make inquiries in the proper quarter, and shall do myself the honour of calling upon you to-morrow about this time. I must request you to be at home, because my time is valuable, and I shall wish to talk to you for a little while on important business."

Lady Brandon was ashy pale. Her lips were parted, and revealed her white teeth, which bore a resemblance to pearls, so exquisitely were they formed.

Girling held out his hand for her ladyship to press, but she withdrew hers with a shudder.

"No!" she cried. "You cannot make me do that. I am not obliged to shake hands with you, if I am in your power."

"I am of a different opinion," Girling said, with a cruel smile. "Your ladyship will act wisely in taking the hand I offer you. I have heard that a man once saved his life by fraternizing with the executioner, who afterwards pretended to perform his odious duty, in reality allowing his prisoner to escape."

Lady Brandon saw no release from this petty tyranny, so she allowed her hand to be pressed by a man whom three days ago she would not have condescended to look at. There was little evidence of vitality or animation in that tiny, well-formed hand, that reposed, cold and motionless, in William Girling's fist. He did not care for that. What he wanted to do was, to humble her pride, and show her that she was little better than his servant. Before he went, he rudely tore off a rose from the bower, and holding it in his hand, walked gaily towards the door. He trod upon air. He had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations. He determined to keep possession of the child, because he thought—firstly, that he could make more out of Lady Brandon's fears, than he could out of the earl's gratitude. The nobleman would, no doubt, be transported with the most ecstatic joy and delight at once more finding his lost son. But after all, gratitude is aptly described as a sense of favours to come. A service is soon forgotten, and memories are frequently found to be defective. When he had left the room, Lady Brandon raised her head, and inhaled the air with evident satisfaction, as if some noxious vapour had suddenly been dissipated, or some plague-ridden gale banished from the spot. Springing to her feet, she opened a jewel-bedecked cabinet, and took out a small vial, from the neck of which she poured seven drops into a glass of water. It had an instantaneous effect upon her. She was exhilarated at least forty per cent. above her former depressed state of spirits. Ringing the bell, she ordered her brougham, and went upstairs to dress. There was an expression of care and anxiety upon her face. She seemed ill at ease, and ashamed of the easy and unconditional surrender she had made to William Girling. The brougham drove her ladyship to Kensington Gardens. She alighted, avoiding the broad and frequented path, up and down which the gay and giddy throng were promenading. She wandered into the forest, as it may almost be called, which extends towards the park. The domain is spacious, and the trees patriarchal, some of them being as fine as any in the country. Beneath the umbrageous shelter afforded by the foliage of the stately oak, the towering elm, and the spreading beech, whose boughs were fast becoming clad with verdure, she found what she appeared to require—an unbroken solitude. Her walk, however, was not objectless. Against a lordly trunk, appertaining to a chestnut-tree, of large dimensions, was reclining a man of gentlemanly appearance. He was fashionably dressed, and engaged in smoking a cigar. He was tall and dark, his features regular and well defined, so much so as to be almost Grecian in their classic outline. Lady Brandon approached him with every demonstration of delight upon her face. He was no less pleased

at seeing her. This man was Sir Lawrence Allingford, to whom Lady Brandon was secretly engaged. None of her relations were aware of the intimate relations existing between them. For reasons of their own, they kept their engagement a profound secret. When the first flush of pleasure passed away, her ladyship's face became clouded over. Sir Lawrence remarked the sudden change, and inquired the cause. Briefly she informed him of all that had happened, and of the confession Girling had extracted from her against her will and inclination. Her lover looked sternly at her, and exclaimed:

"When we first organized that plot, the object of which was to deprive the Earl of Brandon of male issue, I told you, above all things, to manage it expertly. You have not done so. Consequently, we find ourselves in the power of an unprincipled ruffian, who will be only too glad to render your life as miserable and as unhappy as lies within the scope of his ability."

"I know I have been guilty of an error, Lawrence," she replied, tearfully. "Do not upbraid me. I can bear that man's persecutions much better than I can your reproaches!"

A desultory conversation followed, in which they endeavoured to devise some means of outwitting William Girling. Sir Lawrence promised her ladyship to be at the same trying-place in three days from that time. In the meanwhile she was, by his instructions, to carry into execution a scheme, the nature of which he imparted to her. Sir Lawrence Allingford was a baronet able to trace his descent a long-way back, but his rent-roll did not in any way correspond to the length of his pedigree. Lady Brandon, besides being of good family, was very wealthy, and was the representative of that branch through which the estates of her brother would descend in the event of his dying childless. A hostile movement was that day set on foot which William Girling little dreamed of, but of which he was destined to feel the effects on the morrow. The fact was that Lady Brandon and Sir Lawrence Allingford were conspirators. They played for a high stake, and it was unlikely in the extreme that they would submit to the loss of the game without a struggle.

The next day Girling paid his promised visit to Lady Brandon. She received him with cold dignity and frigid stateliness. He laughed inwardly at what he thought an affectation of courage. He had not the least inkling of her ladyship's engagement with the poor but well-descended baronet, neither did he know that they were in league together. Had he done so, he would not have felt so much at his ease as he did. He had evidently made some use of the money he had the day before obtained from her who may be called his victim. He was well dressed, and could boast of possessing some jewellery, which, if not of the best and most expensive description, was yet not at all discreditably to its possessor. With an air of suavity, such as his new-born prosperity had imparted to him, he addressed her ladyship in a fluent manner.

"I find," he said, "by consulting the peerage, that your Christian name is Blanche. I shall take the liberty of addressing you as Lady Blanche, or perhaps I may dispense with the prefix occasionally. I consider that we are now on such terms of friendship—and, may I say, intimacy? that ceremony is unnecessary between us."

"You may think so," replied Lady Brandon. "You have a right to your own opinion, but I can tell you plainly that I shall permit no familiarity on your part."

"You cannot help yourself," he said, in an insolent manner, which indicated that he believed what he said.

"I differ with you then, altogether," said her ladyship. "It will be best for you not to provoke those resources which have been hitherto hidden from you, but which I, nevertheless, have at my command. If you want any money, come for it or send for it. As long as your demands are moderate, and within the bounds of reason, we shall never quarrel about that; but never be so unguarded as to venture to insult me by any coarseness or vulgarity. If you do, take my word for it, you will repent it, once and for ever."

"It is very well," replied Girling, with a laugh, "for you to endeavour to intimidate me, but I have you in my power, and I am resolved to subjugate you entirely. My will shall be your will, and you shall recognize the power of my away and the strength of my dominion."

In spite of this threat, Lady Brandon did not seem to feel the full force of her bondage. She smiled derisively. Perhaps she was relying upon those hidden resources she had spoken of. It was intolerably galling to her pride to be addressed familiarly as Blanche by a man, of whom she knew nothing—one of the people—perhaps, forming an infinitesimal fraction of the very dregs and refuse. She had, by her own folly, placed herself within his power, as he had

repeatedly told her; but when he treated her with contempt and insult, it was more than her proud spirit could brook. She resented it, and in a manner totally unlooked for and unanticipated by William Girling.

"You bring your punishment on yourself," she exclaimed. "If you had not been intrusive and oblivious of the difference which my rank and my position ought to exact from a man in your condition of life, I should have satisfied your demands for money, for I am happy to say I have an abundance of that; as it is, you must take the consequences of your rashness."

William Girling was not aware that he had said or done anything particularly obnoxious or offensive to her ladyship; but he could see, from her quivering lip and dilated nostrils, that she was angry at some real or fancied slight. He had merely been desirous of proving to so beautiful a creature, that, notwithstanding the disparity between them, he held her in thrall, and that she could not call her soul her own without previously asking his consent to the declaration. In this he was mistaken. Her ladyship, after casting a glance of mingled pity and contempt upon Girling, clapped her hands loudly together. The result of this signal was not at first apparent; perhaps a quarter of a minute elapsed before anything came of it, but fifteen seconds, short though the time appears, is a larger space in moments of great expectation than when the hours are gliding pleasantly in the midst of social intercourse. The door opened and a tall, swarthy negro entered the room. He was of immense size and prodigious strength. To European notions, negroes are hideous and ungainly. This one was a sort of Satan amongst fiends, pre-eminently ugly; a tremor of repulsion ran through you as you gazed unwittingly upon him. Lady Brandon addressed him saying:

"Zanzebar, this is the man; do as you have been instructed."

With his lips compressed and his eyes flashing, the negro took a few rapid strides which quickly brought him up to William Girling.

CHAPTER V.

Hark! there are murmurs heard in Lara's hall,
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call,
A long loud shriek—and silence—

Lara.

THE sudden apparition of the gigantic negro was an event calculated to alarm and strike terror into a stronger mind than that of Girling. The shipwrecked mariner, the sole survivor of the catastrophe which robbed him of all his companions, thrown upon an island peopled by repulsive ogres, could not have been more surprised than the man who a few minutes ago imagined that he had the game in his own hands, and was able to dictate terms to Lady Blanche Brandon.

But he had not been aware that a negro of a preposterous size was kept upon the premises, like a familiar demon, to enforce her ladyship's commands, and to compel those who did not pay proper respect to her dictates to listen to reason.

Zanzebar was as silent and immobile as fate. As he stood lowering over Girling, he had the appearance of something unnatural. It was not altogether the colour of his skin and the hideousness of his make, but there was an indescribable mannerism about him which was strange and weird.

Lady Brandon sank into a chair after the negro entered the room. Relying upon his superior strength, she felt herself safe from the persecutions of Girling, whose bearing had lately become so intolerable that she had been obliged to resort to extraordinary measures of self-defence to rid herself of an unbearable nuisance. It was not the tax which he imposed upon her purse: that she could and would have borne, but she could not bear his insults—his free and easy way of talking to her—and various other petty annoyances which were included in the bondage he had succeeded in establishing over her, but which she was now going to dissipate and break asunder. She was a lady of rank, and possessed a large stock of hereditary pride, which was easily wounded. Her nature was such that she never forgave an injury, and her ambition was so great that she would gladly sacrifice every one who stood in her way in order to accomplish her own selfish ends. She had endeavoured, in the most heartless way, to take the life of her brother's only child, who would prevent her own child, when she married, from becoming Earl of Brandon.

The Countess of Brandon was inconsolable at its loss. Grieving by night and by day, the poor bereaved mother wept incessantly, and was gradually wasting away. Rapidly as she was fading—swiftly as her sublimity existence was approaching its last and final consummation—she did not languish sufficiently fast to satisfy the murderous wishes of the beautiful but wicked Blanche, who was now gloating over the evident dismay of William Girling.

Zanzebar, without a single word, seized him by the

collar, and, without any apparent exertion, held him at arms length.

Girling was seized with a panic. For a time he could do nothing. The pains of death, as it were, fell upon him. Perhaps his captor was the perpetrator of some hideous and nameless atrocity, and would consider murder as a pastime and an amusement.

He raised his eyes to Lady Brandon, and cast an expressive and imploring glance upon her. She laughed harshly and unpleasantly. As the sound entered his ears he thought it ominously discordant. Completely paralysed with a dread of something vague and awful, William Girling fell upon his knees in a posture of supplication, as if he would mutely appeal for mercy, if not for pardon.

Her ladyship looked unutterably scornful at this exhibition of weakness, which did not move her in the slightest degree. She waved her small and lily-white hand as a command to Zanzebar, and exclaimed:

"Take him away!"

Shivering like a leaf in the summer breeze, Girling was dragged from the room in the strong grasp of the negro. Upstairs they went, through many a winding passage, until they reached an apartment of limited dimensions, in which were some wicker baskets of various sizes. It was, in point of fact, a lumber-room. The negro kicked the baskets over with his badly-shaped feet, examining them carefully, until he found one which he thought would answer his purpose. Raising the lid, he laid hold of William Girling and endeavoured to bundle him into the receptacle; but his design was frustrated. Girling had hitherto been utterly prostrated by the suddenness of all that had happened—it was so totally unlooked for. Resistance to his demands on the part of Lady Brandon was an occurrence he had not anticipated for a moment. There was something about the negro servant of her ladyship which was calculated to paralyze a man's power of action; but when William Girling felt himself about to be treated in an ignominious manner, such as a child would have resisted in some way or other, he exerted all the physical strength of which he was capable, and struck the negro forcibly under the ear.

Zanzebar was altogether unprepared for this attack, and staggered slightly from the force of the blow; but quickly recovering himself, he retaliated, and a fearful struggle began.

Girling was now himself again. He was not quite ignorant of the first principles of wrestling, for soldiers are accustomed to exercise their muscles, and indulge in manly sports during the hours set apart for recreation. He did his best; but he was no match for the negro, who, in this instance, overpowered science by brute force. At first, the fight waged with varying fortune; but, as the struggle progressed, Girling gradually succumbed to the conquering power of his antagonist.

Zanzebar stood up and balancing himself well on his toes, threw out his right hand with great strength. Girling rolled on his back and lay in a corner in a comatose state, not completely insensible, but too much hurt and exhausted to renew their combat. While in this state the negro found no difficulty in doing as he liked with his victim, he picked him up just as he would a dead dog, and looked at him. Finding he was partially senseless, he put him down again. Extemporizing a couch upon the top of a hamper, he lighted a pipe and waited with that philosophic patience peculiar to his race, until Girling showed symptoms of re-animation. He had to wait some little time.

The tobacco in his clay receptacle was dimming, when Girling moved uneasily. As soon as he saw a possibility of his commands being obeyed, Zanzebar told Girling to follow him. He threatened him with the severest penalties in the event of disobedience. Feeling that resistance would be suicidal, Girling did as he was told. They left the lumber-room and descended a flight of back stairs, which eventually led them through a side entrance into a yard. Here a cab was in waiting for them. The negro forced Girling, who was still half-stupified, into the vehicle, and after a few words had been spoken to the cabman, the hack-carriage drove off.

Hitherto Girling had thought that it was the intention of her ladyship to have him killed and put out of the way by the sable minister of her will, who resembled a prince of darkness, or a slave of vice; but now a feeling of exultation possessed him, and his spirit revived. As long as there is life, hope is not far off. As long as you live and preserve your health you need never despair, though the stone walls of a prison confine you. Of course, speculation was idle as to his destination. A thousand conjectures floated through his fertile brain, but he could not hit upon a single idea which seemed probable or at all tangible.

It was a long, weary drive. The ceaseless din which the traffic of the streets perpetually raises smote his senses with its de^u iteration, its monotonous

portinacity. It was the roar of the great city in all its intensity, the everlasting hum of the human bees who are ever working in their busy hive. In what direction they were going, William Girling was at a loss to imagine. He was in the safe custody of the black, who was instructed to dispose of him in some way. In vain he asked himself what his fate was to be. He had heard of people in the olden times being kidnapped and shipped off to the West Indies; but in the days of Victoria, our colonial possessions are destitute of slaves, who disappear before the hurrying march of a constantly advancing civilization. He racked his brain with puzzling queries until he grew confused. So he sank into a sullen apathy, and resigned himself to his destiny, whatever it might be. Yet life was ineffably sweet to him. That morning, he had cherished the most ambitious schemes. He thought that he had the golden ball at his foot, and need only put out his feet to reach the goal of fortune. Sad mistake, disastrous error! He was unacquainted or forgetful of the vicissitudes which wait upon the children of men, and people are never so near their fall as when they reach the dizzy pinnacle of their zenith, from which an inconstant goddess is impatiently longing to hurl them headlong. At last the cab stopped. The black seized him by the arm and compelled him to alight, assuring him in emphatic tones that if he spoke a word he would instantly stab him to the heart. Girling offered no opposition. He thought that passive obedience was at present the best course he could pursue. He was conducted some distance. They neared the banks of the river. A cry resembling a preconcerted signal was responded to. Shortly the heavy splash of oars was heard, and a boat appeared. Girling was forced by Zanzebar to embark, and the sailors who manned it bent over their stretchers with a will, until it was soon gliding rapidly over the surface of the hurrying stream. Here was a new mystery and a fresh enigma. Ceasing to worry himself with speculations and problems impossible of solution, Girling listened to the clang of the revolving oars as they moved backwards and forwards in the rowlocks. A nautical exclamation brought the boat to a stand-still. The negro bade him in his usual harsh accents to mount a ladder. He did so, and was soon on the deck of a small trading-vessel, probably of eight hundred tons burthen. He was not allowed much leisure for wondering, for Zanzebar, after speaking a few words with some one who seemed to have the command of the ship, caught him in his iron grasp, and dragged him with irresistible force towards a sort of cupboard constructed near the main hatchway. It was of very small dimensions, and used solely for keeping brooms and funnels for swabbing the decks. Girling made an effort at resistance, but it did not avail him much. He was thrown head over heels into the narrow space. The door closed upon him, and he was in utter darkness. He could hear the fiendish chuckle of the black as the latter departed, after having treated a man just as if he had been so much carrion. With his heart palpitating as if it would break, Girling, striving to stifle his emotion, lay in his cramped and unpleasant position, anxiously awaiting the next phase of the strange adventure of which he was the unwilling hero.

(To be continued.)

HOLYWELL CAVE.

EVENING shadows were closing around them. She drew a little nearer to him.

"For three years, Algernon?"

"Yes. I suppose it will be impossible to get through sooner than that. I aim at thoroughness rather than brilliancy. But it is growing dark. I will not detain you in the dewy air."

"I—I shall miss you, Algernon."

"Thank you. It is pleasant to be remembered. My regards to your mother. And now, good night Katharine."

"Good night, Mr. Sydney."

He went down the path to the gate, without looking back on what he was leaving; and she, cold and shivering, crept into the gloom of a clump of laburnums, and laid her throbbing forehead in the wet grass. When the last echoes of his footsteps had died away, she lifted herself, and put back the heavy hair from her face, moaning out:

"And this is the end!"

For years, Katharine Fane had indulged in a wild dream. The awakening was rude and harsh.

There is but very little to tell of her past life: only a simple annal. Of course, you will say she erred. All women do, who give the holiest and purest affections of their hearts unsought. Judge her mildly, however, for we are all shadowed by the curse of the First Fall.

If she loved Algernon Sydney, he was not faultless, for he had led her on to it. He had done his best to draw her toward him, whether he cared for her or not.

Mr. Sydney and Katharine had been much together. He was intellectual, and this was the first secret of their attachment.

The neighbourhood in which they resided was like most country neighbourhoods. There was little taste for anything beyond the grossly material; that which feeds the body stands pre-eminently there. Those who have no hunger of the soul need no spiritual food.

Katharine grew attached to him. She had a woman's heart—tender, faithful, proud—yearning after love.

Her sole kindred was an aged mother—a feeble, undemonstrative woman, living totally in the past, and loving nothing so well as the grave that held her young husband, dead since the first infancy of his daughter, Katharine.

The Fanes were poor. This girl's daily labour mostly supported them. She had always had a hard life.

No wonder she turned to Algernon, away from the rude, well-meaning country lads with whom she had nothing in common; and associating with him day after day, as she did, it is small matter of surprise that she learned to love him.

People talked about them—of course they did. It was currently believed that they were engaged; that they would be married when Algernon was through college.

That time had passed, and now he had gone to study law with a friend of his father. He was to be away three years.

He might or might not return to Milford during the time. And this was their parting.

Vaguely, Katharine had hoped for words of love. She had a right to expect them, for Algernon Sydney had been to her what no man should be to a woman unless he loves her.

Still, although he had left her in silence, she did not give him wholly up. She excused him tenderly, as we always do those who are dear to us.

How drear were the days that succeeded! Do you know how it feels to wait, and live on, when you have nothing to wait for—when the future holds for you no dear promise, however intangible; no sacred hope on which to rest the ache in your heart, and gather balm?

The winter passed monotonously, and spring, with its sweet auguries of summer's wealth of bloom, opened in warmth and beauty.

She almost dreaded the glorious autumn afternoons, so full of ripe perfection and thrilling life: they filled her with a mild sadness for those summer afternoons gone before.

And thus a whole year fled away. Again, it was October. Not a word of remembrance had she ever received from Algernon; and very rarely did any tidings of him reach Milford. He had no near relations there—only the uncle and aunt who had taken him home when his parents had died.

He never wrote to Katharine, and only once or twice to his uncle. He had no time for correspondence, he said.

Katharine waited and worked. The summer was tedious to her. The increasing feebleness of her mother tasked her strength to the utmost, with her other duties; and when the bracing September airs swept over the hills, they found her languid and pale beneath their touch. So it was October, at last, and in one of the golden days Algernon Sydney came home for a brief visit. He met Katharine cordially; his hands held hers closely. He would have kissed her, had he not been too proud for what he deemed such a childish manifestation of affection.

He had grown in the world's knowledge. He had dipped deep into many strange "isms"; he doubted where no heart should doubt; he cavilled at all mysteries because he could not sift them to the bottom. He accepted nothing on trust. His faith was small; his love of analysis strongly dominant. He would have torn apart the red rose to find what secret chamber at the core held the subtle perfume that drifted in upon his senses.

At an evening party, given in Mr. Sydney's honour, Katharine accidentally listened to a scrap of conversation between that gentleman and a friend of his. Evidently, they had been speaking of marriage, and this was what she heard:

"But you will marry and settle, some time, Sydney?"

"I can hardly say. That time is very distant, if it is ever to exist. Possible, but not probable. Women are well enough for those who can always talk down; but, as a rule, they are vastly inferior to our sex. Indeed, I have never seen a woman who deserved a footing of equality."

The remainder was inaudible; but Katharine had heard enough. Knowing and feeling that worth is never to be estimated by sex, her whole soul revolted with a sort of lofty scorn from this man, and she spoke out involuntarily:

"I will put him out of my heart for ever!"

A little after, she met him in the hall. She was hooded and shawled—ready to go home.

He hastened to her side, and offered his arm. She met his eye, fully, and held his glance.

"Thank you. Mr. Denleigh will attend me. Good evening."

He stepped aside for Denleigh to pass, bowed coldly, and returned to the drawing-room.

The next day, Algernon called to say "good-bye." He was going away the ensuing morning.

Katharine had a couple of young girls visiting her, and she received him in their presence, and did not, as usual, accompany him to the door. So he had no word in private with her.

A little piqued, and somewhat humbled by her indifference, he left Milford, thinking she was indulging in a fit of girlish spleen, half-hoping and expecting that she would write and ask his forgiveness for her coldness.

Another year went by, and no word had ever passed between them.

Katharine had fulfilled her resolution. No thought of Algernon Sydney intruded to mar the sad, monotonous quiet of her lonely life.

Early in the winter, the calm was broken up.

Hitherto, her suffering had been negative; now it changed, and all the light and brightness of existence seemed shut away from her.

Her mother failed suddenly; and one evening, returning from the village, she found Mrs. Fane lying on the floor, speechless and senseless.

Her cry of horror called the nearest neighbours to the house; and committing her mother to their care Katharine flew back to the village for a physician.

It was a cold, sleety night, and with uncovered head and shoulders, and long, dark hair, clinging around her white face, Katharine struck the gentleman in Dr. Barlowe's surgery with something like awe. She made known her errand in a few abrupt words.

The young man who received her offered her a chair. He was sorry, but Dr. Barlowe was not at home—he was out of town. If she would accept of his services, they were at her disposal. He was Dr. Rutherford, and had come to Milford to visit Dr. Barlowe, who was a maternal relative.

"Oh, come quickly!" she exclaimed. "She is dying, I fear, and she is all I have!"

A gleam of feeling shot into the dark eyes of the stranger; he locked the door behind them, and wrapping his shawl around the trembling form of the girl, he lifted her into the chaise which was kept always waiting, and drove off.

Dr. Rutherford's face kept its owner's secrets well; but when he had looked at his patient, he took the hand of Katharine in his own, and led her from the room into another.

She read in his manner the dreadful revelation she feared. He put her into a chair and stooped over, looking into her face with pitying eyes.

"Poor child!" he said, involuntarily.

"Can nothing save her?"

"I fear not. You will try to bear up for her sake. She will need your care a little longer. It will distress her, should she return to reason, to see a face so full of anguish as yours."

Mrs. Fane died on the third day. Died without a word, without a look of recognition in her eyes for her agonized daughter, ere she passed out of life upon the sea of silence.

Dr. Rutherford, with kindly forethought, attended to everything about the funeral.

Then, at her command, he left her; she wanted to be alone with her grief—even the sight of friendly faces hurt her.

Something induced Starr Rutherford to visit the new grave that night, and there, as he had half expected, he found Katharine, prostrate on the cold earth.

"If I only knew how to comfort you," he said.

"Take me home," she cried, clinging to his arm. "She is nearer there than here."

Not a tear had she shed; her eyes were dry and burning, her flesh hot, and her pulse rapid.

Dr. Rutherford's professional anxiety was aroused. He took her home, and searching for something which might stir her feelings, he found the last work upon which Mrs. Fane had employed herself—a white lamb's-wool stocking.

She looked at it a moment, and dropping her head on the arm of the chair, wept long and passionately.

The danger was over. When one can weep, there is always hope of the future. It is the grief that dries up tears which kills.

A kind neighbour took Katharine to reside with her. The Fane cottage was sold, and all traces of her once happy home fell away from the place.

Dr. Rutherford followed up the acquaintance so un-

ceremoniously begun, and called often to lighten the weary hours of her life by cheerful conversation, or the reading aloud of some new book or poem.

Insensibly she began to look forward to these visits as eras of content. She had met at last a nature in which there were no shallow places. She feared not striking a barren bottom, where she had looked for a fathomless depth. Starr Rutherford's was a deeply, rarely-gifted spirit, and in his presence Katharine lived her best life, and was most truly and entirely herself.

But this kind of thing was not to continue. People made themselves busy over the business of the handsome young doctor, and envious tongues decided that it was highly improper for a girl in Katharine's situation to receive his visits.

Something of this reached the girl's ears, and sounded the knell of their pleasant intercourse, for Katharine was sensitive and proud. And just at this time a beautiful young lady arrived at Dr. Barlowe's, and shortly after the old sign of the doctor came down, and a new one, bearing the gilt-lettered names of Barlowe and Rutherford, replaced it. And the beautiful young lady took up her abode at the doctor's, and was introduced among the village people as Miss Croften. She and Dr. Rutherford were out a great deal together, riding and walking, and when the spring opened, boating and botanizing. Rumour said they were affianced and would be married early in the autumn.

Meanwhile, Rutherford would have continued his visits to Katharine, but she had taken the alarm, and repeatedly refused to see him. And after a time he ceased coming.

Katharine toiled harder than ever. She must work to keep away thought. A half-hour's idleness snuffed her for work for a whole day. How she dreaded Sundays. Those quiet, sacred days, when she was obliged to keep the companionship of her own heart, and wear a placid face while listening to prosy sermons which fell on her ear as empty sounds. She was getting to regard everything with a sort of patient indifference. She wondered what people saw to admire in the blue sky, and the grand prospects of hills and mountains, rising up to lay their foreheads against the red glory of the sunset. She marvelled greatly why she had ever been infatuated with the blooming clover-fields, and why the touch of June's breath on her brow had once filled her with such a nameless joy.

And it was June now—calm, serene, delicious—rich with long days of green gloom and gold shadow—days so very long you might almost think you had strayed into that land where there is to be no more night.

There was a picnic party to Holywell Cave one day. The cave was quite a celebrated place, and often resorted to on excursions of the kind. It was six miles from Milford.

John Denleigh invited Katharine, and more to please the good-humoured young farmer than for her own gratification, she went with him. She looked very pale and sad that day. The mourning dress she wore whitened her pale face by the contrast, and her dark eyes, and darker hair, deepened the pallor.

Rutherford was there with Miss Croften. He bowed distantly to Katharine. She returned the salutation as coldly as it was given.

The cave was situated in a thick grove of beeches and maples, not far from a little woodland lake.

They had explored the cave. There was nothing to do now but partake of the refreshments and wander off through the shadows.

John Denleigh was engaged with a pretty country girl. Katharine knew she would not be missed, and she felt a strange desire to know how she should feel alone in the cave.

She hurried thither, sought out the entrance, and seizing a still burning torch which the guide had flung down, she wandered on at random through the windings of the gloomy chambers.

She had gone on for some time without a thought of danger, when the dimming light warned her that she must turn back. But where was the outlet of the apartment in which she stood? She looked for it in vain. The rocky walls were smooth and solid as unbroken granite.

She stopped her search, and sat down on a detached fragment of stone. Scarcely a thrill of pain passed through her. She thought of the fair earth without—of the singing birds—of the crystal white brooks, and the cloudless skies looking tenderly down at their reflection in woodland lake and stream. All the sweet things of life rose up before her with multiplied interest. Shut out from all!

"Lost!" she spoke the word aloud.

"Lost together!"

She knew Starr Rutherford's voice, and turned toward him.

"Miss Fane, pardon me. I thought myself alone

in misfortune. Have you any idea of the way out?"

"No."

"Neither have I. May I stay near you?"

"As you like."

The dying torch flamed up, and showed him something in her face that made the words leap out, hot and passionate:

"Katharine, I will have an explanation! Once you could have learned to love me. To-day, and these many days, you have been ice. What has changed you?"

"Sir!"

"I am not afraid of your anger, Katharine. Only tell me what barrier stands between us—give me something tangible on which to exert my will, and I will make all clear, though the feud himself struck us apart. I have heard the story of your engagement to Mr. Sydney, but I do not credit it."

"Thank you. I have never been anything to Algernon Sydney."

"As I thought. If he had loved you, how could he leave you to suffer on without his voice and his care to comfort you? And I love you so entirely, Kate, that if I knew we should never leave this place alive, I should feel a sweet content in the thought that I should stay here with you always."

"Dr. Rutherford, you forget that you are bound. You forget that you insult me, and degrade yourself by this declaration. What would Miss Croften think of it?"

"She? Oh! she would not object. She is the best girl in the world to her unworthy brother."

"Her brother?"

"Yes. Is it possible you did not know our relationship? Alice Croften is my half-sister, and you thought she was something more. Is that it?"

"I was so informed."

"And did you regret it? On your soul, answer me truly, and your reply will tell me all I wish to know. Did you regret it?"

She spoke beneath her breath, but he heard the low-voiced words, and gathered her into his arms.

"Mine, Katie? Mine?" he questioned.

And she responded:

"Yes, yours."

Afterward, they sought together for a way out of the cave. Of course they found it, for even walls of solid rock have no power to stand when love craves a way.

They came out into the light again. The afternoon had worn away, and the sun was lingering golden red on the blue summit of a distant hill. Even while they looked, it disappeared, and left them alone in the shadow.

Rutherford's eyes sought those of his companion. "We have lost the picnic, Katie. What have we gained?"

"Each other!" she said, gently.

The gay party had been gone some time, evidently. Rutherford's horse and carriage remained, with a note pinned to the cushion. It ran thus:

"John Denleigh's compliments to Dr. Rutherford, and hopes he has no objections to the writer's riding home with Miss Croften, as both that lady and your present scribe were left in the lurch by their proper partners."

No, Dr. Rutherford had no objections whatever.

That was the happiest evening Katharine had ever known. The handsome grey horse took his pace, and the stars were out in the purple voids, when Rutherford lifted Katharine from the carriage at her own door, and with his lips to hers whispered over the words—"Mine, Katie, mine!"

A week afterward, Algernon Sydney arrived at Milford. He sought Katharine very soon, and asked her to be his wife. He had waited a long time, he said, to be sure that he might not meet some other woman who would be dearer, but feeling satisfied that she was the one heaven had set apart to aid him, he could now ask her to take her place.

And she answered him briefly and coldly that it was too late.

His chagrin was great, but his heart did not suffer—such people have no capability of suffering save through whatever attacks their selfishness. A month afterward he married a rich widow with two children, and called himself content.

But looking into his face to-day, you see only lines of care, perplexity, and unrest, while on Katharine Rutherford's forehead the seal of sweet peace is set for ever.

C. A.

THE MAORI CHIEFS IN ENGLAND.—We alluded recently to some uncomfortable disclosures made at a Birmingham public meeting in regard to the position of the New Zealanders (whose visit has been repeatedly noticed), and their relations with the adventurers who brought them over. A further statement appears in a letter addressed by Mr. Kynnersley, Birmingham police magistrate. The upshot of it is that for a long

time past dissatisfaction and discontent have prevailed among the Maories. The public meetings, at which they were expected to appear in mats once worn by the natives, but long since disused, became intolerably distasteful to many of them. Disputes arose about money matters. Three of the party left Mr. Jenkins (one of the three adventurers who brought them over), and joined a troupe of performers at the Alhambra. The lectures, moreover, became less and less productive. The funds of the adventurers were exhausted, and as the cold weather came on they suffered severely; they became dispirited, gloomy, and miserable. Some of them were suffering from illness, and all sensibly felt the extreme cold of the winter about the time of Christmas. Under these circumstances the intervention of friends became necessary. The agreements between the respective parties have been cancelled, and nine of the Maories are now anxious to return home—two (Pomare and his wife) having been already sent at the cost of the Queen. Lord Shaftesbury (who advised the return of the party soon after its arrival) has signified his readiness to reorganize the committee which was formed last summer, and promote a subscription for sending them out in comfort. A committee has been formed also in Birmingham for the same purpose.—This party of Maories, with Mr. Jenkins, as our readers may no doubt remember, visited Bristol some months since, where they met with a cordial reception, upon the supposition that the statements of Mr. Jenkins were correct.

BURIED ALIVE.

"So handsome, too!" said Aunt Ann Conway, in her quiet voice; "the handsomest man I ever saw. How did you become acquainted with him, my darling?"

"Papa made his acquaintance somehow on the railroad," was the reply.

Minnie Conway, her soul in her eyes, watched the retreating figure of a young man down the white-gravelled path. There! the gate was shut, the eager glance withdrawn, and Minnie, shy, blushing, yet pleased at her aunt's appreciation, addressed herself to the work she had been toying with.

"You see he owns the mine here."

"Ah! then he is rich as well as handsome. You are one of fortune's favourites, Minnie Conway, if ever there lived a girl that was. Trouble and care have never come near you; you have drawn a prize in the lottery of life—a rare prize, I foresee, in this young man. Rich, beautiful, and happy, dear child, may no cloud throw its shadow over your future."

"I am happy—oh, so happy!" whispered Minnie, as her aunt left the room, just smothering a sigh; "but what is this unearthly chill that freezes me sometimes? I felt it when Robert gave me his parting kiss, and just as aunt said I had never known trouble or care—oh, such an ice-throb! If I were superstitious now—but, nonsense! there are my roses to water. I am glad he loves flowers, though not as passionately as I do; I could not quite expect that."

In and out among the little stands of rose-bushes and geraniums stole Minnie, her breezy hair, partly escaped from the net that confined it, trembling against cheek and throat. She was pretty—one of those summer creatures, with eyes like the gentian and lips of infantile sweetness, and cheeks dashed with the faintest crimson, that came and went cloudily. Intent on her work, smiling, breathing in sweets, her face now embowered in snowy clusters, now surrounded with star-like blossoms the colour of her eyes, drooping among stray threads of her golden hair, she did not hear a step behind her—was not conscious of another presence, till a light touch startled her, and she turned, eyes wide open and lips parted.

"Why, Robert!" Down went the watering-pot, which fortunately had spent the most of its contents. "I thought you were far on your way by this time; but I am so glad!"

Yes, easy to see that in the innocent face and the love-look that glorified it.

"Do you know, pet, that I staid one moment too late? I never missed a train before; but it was one of your little special providences, I suppose, for I met Stephens, my foreman, directly after, and found that my presence is needed at the mine to-morrow. So it's all right—another pleasant evening before us!" He took both her hands in his, and standing there in his beautiful manhood, looked straight into the joy-lighted eyes, murmuring, in scarcely audible tones, "You are glad to see me back, Minnie?"

"Indeed I am, Robert. There! the third time!" and stepping back a pace, she cast a beseeching glance towards him.

"What is it, my love?" His gaze was inexpressibly anxious.

"Will you laugh at me if I tell you? A thrill, ice-cold. This makes three times it has come swift as

the lightning through every vein. Did you ever hear," she added, in lower tones, as Robert passed an arm around her, of the old superstition—that when one shudders some one is crossing his grave? Am I not weak and fanciful? A foolish thing to tell you." "Not foolish, dear—not in the telling me this. As to the old saying, we'll let that pass. I fear you have taken cold, though; chills are the symptoms. We must not sit out on the balcony to-night; it was damper than we thought last evening."

The lovers were happy. Aunt Ann sat in a corner, sheltered by the great folds of the crimson curtain, nearly hidden by her luxurious arm-chair—sat there half-smiling, half-sad, and watched them.

"He loves her truly, strongly, devotedly," she said to herself; "he worships the beautiful soul that looks so purely out of that good, sweet face. Oh, if her mother could see her now! I have thought of her death-bed so often to-day. Is she here, I wonder? Does she ever come? Can she see this pure, unselfish happiness of two noble souls? And that face of his, written all over by heaven's own hand, what a treasure this man will be to her! I could have asked no better gift for my motherless charge."

A ringing laugh roused her not long after. Aunt Ann started from her seat. The lamp still burned brightly: bud, flower and leaf in the woven carpet seemed touched with richer colouring; a rose lay on the floor at her feet; some sheets of music had fallen from the pianoforte; two chairs stood in close contact.

She had been dreaming of Oaklands, her father's homestead, from which she had just returned—thither she made a yearly pilgrimage—and this sudden awakening to the contrast from plain farmhouse furniture to the splendour of her brother's home bewildered her. She looked at the little ormolu clock on the mantel-piece—quarter-past ten.

"Dear me, it's later than I thought," she said, with an effort, then listened to the murmuring, cooling voices outside.

"Some paths are almost thornless," she added, softly, rousing herself more thoroughly; "may she never know what it is to lay her idol as low as I have laid mine. Then folding her hands on her lap, she leaned back again, whispering—"Twenty years ago."

Was it a sob that floated through the air till it reached the somewhat dulled senses of Aunt Ann? In a moment, she was bolt upright again, looking for her "child." No need to look far. In one of the easy-chairs, leaning towards each other so lovingly, sat Minnie.

No radiance now. The light of a great love did not shine in face or smile. The head was bent; the hands half-hidden by the bright curls; the eyes all hidden by the hands, and there she was, sobbing.

"A quarrel!" thought Aunt Ann, swiftly, and then she spoke:

"Minnie, darling!"

The head bent lower—the sobs grew quieter, but more frequent.

Aunt Ann, in wonderment, left her seat, and stood a moment before the "child"; then she drew the other chair around, sat down, facing her little niece, put one soft hand on the passive hands of the young girl, wet and warm with tears.

"Won't you tell me, darling?"

"Oh, Aunt Ann! I can't. I don't know what it is!"

"Has there been a misunderstanding, dear, between you?"

"Not for a moment!" and the flushed, indignant face looked up. "There never will be, if—oh, if —"

and the words were lost in sobs.

"Why, Minnie, you alarm me! Didn't I hear you laugh a moment ago?"

"Yes, aunt, I was so happy then; but—but when he was going—when he went, there came a cloud so dark—so very dark —"

"And broke in rain from my poor little child's eyes. Minnie, you are giving way to a whim, I fear. This tendency to superstition will make your life unhappy. You must conquer it."

"But, Aunt Ann, I can't—not this. It is too real; it seems to stand before me, and I want to thrust it away, so—but it won't go. Oh, what shall I do?"

"Why, how do you feel, my darling?"

"As if something very dreadful were going to happen to Robert. Oh, aunt, do I love him too well? Is God going to punish me? Is it very wrong to be so happy?"

The sad face, down which the tears were streaming unwept—the eyes, lately so sparkling, drenched and dim, perplexed good Aunt Ann.

"What can it mean, child?" she asked, gravely.

"Oh, Aunt Ann, I dreamed he went down that horrible mine, where he is going to-morrow, and"—she shuddered from head to foot—"he never came up again!"

"But dreams always go by contraries, Minnie; I find it so!"

"Still, it left such a very, very frightful impression!"

"Why did you not tell him, dear? He would not probably go if you had asked him not."

"Oh, aunt, how could I? I can't bear to appear so foolish, even to you. There, I will be more womanly!"

She dashed the tears away, and smiled drearily. The sorrow had imprinted itself too strongly upon her sensitive heart to be banished by word or smile. She said good night, gave her aunt the usual kiss and embrace, and retired to pass the night in a dull, half-waking terror. Towards morning she slept.

Aunt Ann went up to her room at eight o'clock. Minnie had not awakened. As the good woman was passing down-stairs, she saw John Newcombe standing in the doorway. John was a rough diamond—not only rough, but a little ragged; it was not yet time for him to be tipsy.

His appearance at that part of the house, one of the rudest of miners, begrimed, his hat on sideways, with his miner's lamp standing over his left ear, his arms hanging helplessly, his mouth open, was cause for surprise; but the dumb terror with which the man was shaking sent a thrill of apprehension through and through her.

"Why, John, what are you here for at. 'a hour?"

"Oh, missis, I doubt if you heered it. They be gone down the mine; the rope's broke, and they're in the water there, Mister Williamson and three others."

"For heaven's sake, what do you mean?" cried Aunt Ann, her heart beating in great throbs. She could not take in the import of his frightful communication.

"What I say, missis—the rope's broke, and they're down there. You see they goes down and swings to one side into the shaft. This time there's a mistake about the windlass; the rope caught a sharp rock about half-way down, that cut it right through. Then down they goes. There be an awful time there—"

Jenny Sawyer, she's raving like mad, and the other women they be howling. Jenny she's tore her hair out, so they had to hold her arms. And then there's Mr. Vateleigh, the agent, he's gone too—two of us miners and they two gentlemen. Lord bless us!" and he shook his head. "But I were told to come up here for Mr. Conway. Could he come?"

Aunt Ann turned away, white as a sheet. Her strength barely kept her up till she reached the dining-room, where her brother still sat with his paper. He heard her step, and spoke without lifting his eyes:

"Isn't Minnie up yet?"

"Oh, Henry, the mine!—Robert Williamson!—the rope!—oh, heaven! poor Minnie!"

In a moment the man was on his feet; he seemed to comprehend that some frightful accident had happened. Without speaking, he cast one hurried glance at his sister, sprang out of the room, and away from the house.

It was too true. Long before he reached the mouth of the pit he heard the shrieks of Jenny Sawyer, the bride of twelve months.

The fields were green in the distance—even about his path grew little smiling flowers. The sun shone blithely, its golden radiance falling upon the agonized face of poor Jenny, whom other women were entreating to stop those blood-chilling cries of agony. But no; kneeling there, her hair unbound, streaming wildly about her, her arms stretched to their utmost tension above her head, hands palm outward, her veins pulsing and swelling, her tearless eyes, glittering horribly, fixed upon the smiling heaven—still she shrieked, sometimes her William's name, sometimes that of the Almighty.

"This is terrible, terrible!" said Mr. Conway, as, turning, he saw Stephens, Robert Williamson's head business man. "Stephens, are you sure Williamson went down?"

"All I know is that he made arrangements last night to go with Mr. Vateleigh to inspect a new vein which poor Sawyer found yesterday; and what makes it dead certain is, that he stopped at the office just before eight, and said he was on his way there, asking if Vateleigh had come. Vateleigh had gone, and was waiting for him."

With a groan Mr. Conway turned away, his heart aching as it never had before. The image of his child—his loving, happy, motherless little girl—came to his vision as he stood looking at the vain attempts of the women to stop Jenny Sawyer's screams; at the poor young fellow's mother, who, in her Scotch accent, kept up the pitiful cry, "Oh, my bairn! my bairn!"

"Well, what are you going to do?" he cried.

"God knows!" was the reply. "We must send men down as far as they can go with grappling irons. It's pretty deep down there, and I doubt if ever they find the bodies."

"Was there no one at the windlass?"

"It goes by machinery, sir—the first time it ever

played foul—though we're not quite certain yet how it was done. All we know is that the crate is gone, and the rope cut almost as clean as if with a knife."

Mr. Conway went to the edge of the yawning grave and looked down. The damp, gaseous smell made him faint, and, strong-nerved as he was, he felt his self-possession giving way, and almost sprang from the horrible aperture.

Poor Jenny Sawyer had ceased screaming. The women knelt about her, for she had fainted, and stretched prone upon the earth, looked the image of death. Turning from the moaning creatures, the piteous spectacle that one brief hour had summoned into miserable being, Mr. Conway started for home, disheartened, wretched.

As for Minnie—bright little soul!—the sight of the morning sun streaming broadly into her chamber banished all the sad forebodings of the previous night.

"Dear me, how foolish I was," speaking to Aunt Ann, whose hurried movements and white face happily escaped her. "It's all over, aunt, and the next time I bore you with such notions, I'd thank you to pinch me, or punish me in some way, to bring me to my senses."

Eyes, lips, and dimples danced in concert.

"Lord help her!" thought Aunt Ann; "what will be the end of this day?"

"Robert is old enough and wise enough by this time to take care of himself, you see; he's been down the mine often, wanted to take me, but it isn't to my taste. I hate the very idea of entering such a dismal place, peopled with monsters; for I'm sure, if the miners look so unearthly above ground, with their begrimed faces and shining eyes, what must they seem like in those dismal passages? Robert talks pleasantly of it, but then he is so poetical, it sounds different from what it would look. Aunt, I'll take another egg. I'm hungry this morning."

Aunt Ann pushed the silver egg-holder nearer. It hardly occurred to Minnie how silent she was, her own little tongue was so busy.

"Aunt, we'll have a holiday. Papa will let us take the carriage; he is always willing, if you drive, you know. I wish I had been brought up on a farm, and then he would not be so much afraid. Did you know that blue was Robert's favourite colour? It is, and I'm going to get one of those pretty robes, at Delorae's. Papa gave me plenty of money yesterday, and a present for poor old Miss Egerton. She's an odd soul, but so poor, and since her brother died, so sorrowful. Oh, here comes papa. Dear me, and it's office hours; do you suppose he's ill? doesn't he look pale, Aunt Ann?"

But Aunt Ann had sunk down collapsed into a blue shivering fit. The worst was to come, and how was her poor darling to bear it all? She was scarcely conscious of Minnie's queries, or the haggard face of her brother, who could not look at his child.

"Well —"

Aunt Ann's lips were so dry that she could scarcely articulate.

"Why, papa!" and Minnie stood there, white with the dread of an evil scarcely defined. She looked so young, so pretty, so helpless. Spite of himself, Mr. Conway groaned.

"Papa, you are ill; Aunt Ann, he is ill."

Her eyes wandered rapidly from one to the other, a dreadful foreboding, to which she would not give entrance, creeping around her heart.

"Yes, child—ill—ill!" he repeated, turning away.

"Oh, papa, what is it? There is something dreadful that you don't like to tell me—I know there is. Papa, dear, I can bear it—I can bear a great deal!" And she clung to him—clung to his arms, looking helplessly up in his face, that was almost convulsed with the agony of his coming revelation.

"Minnie—I—poor little one—poor little daughter!"

And clasping his hands on her head, he bowed his face upon them, for the hot tears were raining.

Aunt Ann had buried her head in the lounge-cushion. It was a dreary group.

"Papa, I think"—the voice was almost a whisper now, and the slight frame began to shudder—"I think something very awful has happened. I think the shadow has come. Don't speak if I say right—an accident has happened—at the mine."

There was silence, broken only by a smothered moan from Aunt Ann.

"Yes, it is true. I'll be calm, papa, only I can't help shivering a little. Is it not very cold? There, don't be frightened, papa. I've had these turns before. Oh, Robert, Robert!" And she sank senseless in her father's arms.

"I'll take her up, Ann," he said, pressing his white lips together. "God is going to bereave me again. Poor baby! How can she live and her heart broken?"

The chamber was made dark. Only Aunt Ann's footsteps, and they were very quiet, broke the silence.

The driven snow was never purer and fairer than that white face. She lay very still—the poor little broken flower—trying with all the might of her soul to be calm, for the sake of that anguished father sitting behind the curtain at the head of her bed. As yet she had hardly spoken. Suddenly, with a weak hand, she put aside the white drapery.

"Papa," she said, feebly.

He was at her side in a moment.

"I can't be silent. It makes me ache, ache, to think. Tell me, if you please—how many were there?"

"In the—yes—four went down," he whispered, excitedly agitated.

"Down!" She covered her face, shuddering. "Oh, I can almost hear them. They hadn't time to think—to feel—scarcely; do you think they had? God was merciful, and gave them a painless death, perhaps?"

"Perhaps, darling," he answered the yearning glance. "Yes, there is no doubt, but don't talk about it, dear."

"I must talk, papa, because when I talk, I don't see them; otherwise my brain grows hot with fearful images. Let me talk, dear; and who else?"

She spoke with an effort.

"Two of the men—you remember young Sawyer?"

"That handsome young man, who had such a pretty wife? Oh, papa, papa! Poor Jenny! she was so happy yesterday, and to-day—to-day!" Then she was silent for a while, till, breaking out into a bitter cry, she exclaimed, "Oh, papa, how shall I bear it—tell me how!"

Whispering some sacred words of consolation, Mr. Conway bent closer to his darling. She put her hand up. There were tears upon his cheek.

"I am very selfish to make you suffer so," she whispered, with quivering lips, "but oh, papa, you don't know how my heart aches."

"My poor darling, I know something of your sorrow," he said.

"Yes, you lost mamma, but oh, not by a sudden, fearful, unlooked-for death. It seems as if I could see him standing by me here, brushing the hair from his forehead. He smiles upon me as he smiled yesterday, no fear in his eyes, no shadow on his brow. Oh, I did believe so in good angels. I thought they would take care of him, and now he lies there, down, down, down—oh, if I could not see that frightful depth, black, bottomless! Oh, papa, will they ever find him? will they ever bring him up again?"

"Darling, don't, don't!" groaned the stricken man. She turned her face away, curbing her grief for his sake; but meeting the sorrowful eyes of Aunt Ann, a bitter sob burst from her bosom.

"You'll try to rest, dear, for his sake, and remember there is no woe so black but the smile of God can brighten it. Robert is happier than we are."

"I can't think so yet, Aunt Ann. It seems as if he must be sad, even up there—must long to see me. Hark!" She held her breath; her trembling hands were lifted. "Oh, it sounded so much like his step." Then she tried to smile—a weary effort it was, breaking into tears—great tears, that rolled unheeded out of the beautiful eyes, and then she whispered:

"I will try to be patient; but, aunt, I daren't sleep—I'm so afraid of the waking," she added, in an altered tone.

The day drew to a close. In the tree before the window the gay robins were singing. The sky in the west was one great bed of rose and pearl, through which amber islands floated; the far forests, the glittering line of silver, margined by rich, velvety green, the white road that led to the mines, the windmill in the distance, all were alike lustrous by that wonderful crimson glow, through which the sun glimmered his farewell. Up-stairs Minnie still watched, white and still.

Aunt Ann was busy spreading a little table with a very few delicate viands, a square of red-brown toast, a little jug of cream, a cup and saucer, hoping that the tea might be acceptable to her child.

Minnie looked neither here nor there. Her hands were folded, her strength was gone; she was in just that passive state in which the mind resists nothing. All that day she had fasted. Food would choke her, she said.

Fainter grew the song of the robin; the twittering of all the birds was still. The pink faded out of the sky, the glow from the woods, and rapidly the twilight was coming on.

Mr. Conway had not been to his office, but had busied himself between the mine and the bedside of his child. They had been at work all day, and had as yet failed to find the bodies.

Stephens was full of business. He it was who had to answer all questions, and being a somewhat fussy, important character, he made the most of his position.

It was no use trying, he said; grappling-irons would never reach them. It was his opinion they'd been drawn under, and God knew where they'd go.

"Did you send word to town?" asked Mr. Conway.

"Well, yes, though I was so daft like, that I didn't do it by the first train, as I should; never thought of it till it had gone, in fact. But I wrote, and the letter will go by the next. Rather curious, Mr. Conway, that he should miss the train for the first time in his life, and stay here to be killed. If he had gone, you know, why, he'd been safe to-day."

Mr. Conway sighed heavily. He bent his steps in the direction of young Sawyer's cottage. It was a neat tenement, covered with vines. The miner had redeemed much of the stony soil, and the little beds of beans, beets and radishes showed thriftily in the setting sun. The door was open. Sawyer's old Scotch mother sat on the doorstep, rocking to and fro in great distress. Her dry eyes and feebly-working lips drew strongly upon his sympathy.

"How's Jenny, Mrs. Sawyer?" he asked.

"A-well, she's poorly, poorly," crooned the old creature, lifting her heavy glance. "They do say the poor bairn'll die; God help us all!"

"I hope not," and Mr. Conway drove back the tears.

"I canna' say that," repeated the old woman, mournfully. "My time has a'naist come, and what signifies a year or two for a lonely body like me? I'm thinkin' they'd be happier together; and she began swinging back and forth as before.

The dews were falling when he reached his home again. A slender thread of a moonbeam stole through Minnie's window, and silvered the fringe upon the lace curtains of her bed. She had made an attempt to eat something, but had scarcely succeeded. Aunt Ann was just setting the table back as Mr. Conway entered her chamber. She turned a weary glance towards him.

"How is it now, birdie?" he whispered.

She needed not to speak: lips silently quivering told the sad story.

At that moment a carriage drove up to the door. Mr. Conway hastened down-stairs, hoping, dreading he knew not what. From the carriage a middle-aged woman descended, followed by a pale girl of some nineteen summers. They came in quietly, the elder woman coming towards him and grasping his arm with both hands, as she cried, with choked articulation:

"Oh, sir, it is not true; it cannot be true that my son is killed?"

"Are you Mrs. Williamson, madam?"

"Yes, and this is his sister."

"It is indeed most unfortunate," groaned the heart-stricken man. "My child is not the only sufferer."

"It cannot be so. Oh, do not take away all hope," cried the woman, passionately.

"What shall I say? How can I give you hope?"

The woman sank down silent, speechless, pale as death. The young girl placed one arm around her, and leaned her white face on her shoulder. They sat thus when a friend of Mr. Conway was ushered in. He had come by the same train that the two women had taken. He seemed a little surprised at Mr. Conway's lugubrious countenance as he introduced the ladies.

"You have had a serious accident," he said, turning to Mr. Conway.

"Yes, terrible—so dreadful that it has quite broken me down."

"Poor Vatheigh is gone, I heard."

The ladies turned aside and shuddered.

"Yes, and others."

"Strange now," said the other; "Vatheigh told me yesterday that he felt uncomfortably nervous about the mine, had for the last three or four days, and came quite near abandoning it once or twice, and selling out. Pity he hadn't."

A stifled sob from the bereaved mother. The man glanced again curiously. They arose to go. Mr. Conway pressed them to stop longer, and rest awhile. But what mattered rest to them now? Their only anxiety was to leave this terrible place. After seeing them to the carriage, Mr. Conway returned to the gentleman, who was an agent of his, and who immediately began upon the business in hand, which kept them occupied for a half-hour.

"By the way," said the agent, as he was leaving, weren't those ladies related to Williamson, who owned this mine?"

"They were his mother and sister!" said Mr. Conway.

"They seemed in low spirits."

"Good heavens! it was but natural."

"Yes—yes, I suppose so—knowing that Williamson owned the place—it must fall heavier on that account."

"Why, you don't suppose them so mercenary as to think of that now?" said Mr. Conway.

"Well, it's but natural. Of course, they are sorry—they must feel terribly; we should in their place. Well, good morning."

Mr. Conway stared after his retreating guest, won-

dering if he had the feelings of a man thus coolly to refer to the heart-rending sorrow that had overtaken two loving women.

Meanwhile, in the miner's neat little cottage, another scene of sorrow was in progress. Jenny was very low; the doctor said she might not live till morning. Since the birth of her babe she had scarcely spoken. The rough nurse watched beside her, tears of sympathy now and then welling up into her eyes. The little babe, neatly dressed, lay on her lap, and very sad it was to think that the miserable little creature thus ushered upon sorrow, might live to bear the harsh handling of an unsympathizing world.

The only candle was placed far back in the corner, and in the dim light the face of the invalid was of an unearthly whiteness. Near the window sat old Mrs. Sawyer, almost bent double, still crooning to herself, and swaying to and fro, as she had done since the accident. Without, the solemn beauty of a summer evening made the hills and the trees resplendent. It seemed too lovely a night for suffering—for death. From that door the fatal spot could be seen—the offices, and a part of the machinery, and the poor old woman looked often over there as if she could pierce the crusted earth and see the crushed frame of her poor boy. He had come from Scotland to Cornwall seven years before, a bright, blue-eyed boy, winning every one's regard by his merry smile. He had been noticed by more than one person of position, as he emerged from boyhood, showing capacity of no mean order for business. A proud day it had been to him when Mr. Williamson had offered him superior wages, and, though he was still a miner, entrusted him with business that enabled him to lay something by. Then came the purchase of the little cottage and the bit of land—to the great delight of his old mother, who had never dreamed of seeing her son a landowner, and who was prouder of him than she dared say. Next there was his wedding with the prettiest country lass from far around, who had been the ornament of his home—the faithful wife, aye, and the proud one. For young Sawyer was handsome above the ordinary lot of men. Now here was the end—he, mangled and dead, she nearing the shadowy valley—the helpless babe, with scarcely life enough in it to sustain existence, so soon, if it did live, to be an orphan.

A neighbour came in.

"Good evening, Mrs. Sanderson," she said to the nurse, "good evening Mrs. Sawyer"—adding in an aside—"poor soul! how she has failed! I have brought some jelly for the poor girl."

"It's my opinion," said the nurse, "she'll never eat that nor anything else. She hasn't recognized anything for hours, nor took no notice of the poor dear child."

"And who can wonder?" queried the neighbour, "the shock came so sudden. If it had been my John, I know I should have died outright, I know I should. But while there's life, Mrs. Sanderson, there's hope," she added, oracularly.

"Not in that case, I fear," said the nurse; "I never see that pinched look about the mouth for nothin', in my recollection, and I've had a good deal to do with such cases; death is coming, certain. Would you like to see the child?"

"Poor little dear," said the neighbour, assentingly, and the nurse unwrapped the many folds from the form of the sleeping babe. At that moment it began to cry in a sharp, shrill voice, and as the nurse and neighbour looked over in apprehension towards the sick woman, the pale lips parted.

"It's bringing her to reason, I think," said the nurse, hastily soothing the child, and placing it in the neighbour's lap. "I'll speak to her."

She bent over the bed. Jenny looked up with eyes unnaturally bright.

"Is it time to get up?" she asked, quietly.

"No, dear," said the nurse, in a soothing voice.

"But hadn't you better call him, he has to be at the mine so early?"

The nurse cast a piteous glance over to the neighbour, whose eyes were fastened upon the poor unconscious sufferer.

"What is that?" asked Jenny, as the child cried again.

"It's your dear little babe," said the nurse, her coarse features working with emotion.

"And—where's my husband?" cried Jenny, tearfully. "Oh, I remember all now!" and she threw her clasped hands over her eyes. "I remember all, and my dream too, that my husband and baby were with me in heaven; we'll all be there to-morrow," she added, solemnly.

"No, dear, you must try to get well and live for your child's sake," said the neighbour, going forward.

"Is that you, Mary Ellis? Have you come to comfort me in my affliction? It's very kind of you, but not kind to ask me to live; for oh! how would life look to you if your John was killed as my husband

was? No, I'll not look to live—please God, I'd not wish to live; and I'm sure the baby won't, poor thing! born in such sorrow. Let me see the wee thing; lay it down on my pillow."

They complied with the request.

"Oh, if he could have seen it, how proud and happy I'd been; but it's all changed—it's all changed now. I think I'd like to have a minister—a prayer for myself, and baptism for the baby."

In all haste the minister was sent for. He came—a calm, venerable man—had but just returned home, he said, and heard of the accident only a few minutes before, or he would surely have been round. It was a sight—a solemn sound, the words of that prayer for all ages, going heavenward over dying mother and unconscious child—the glistening drops upon the little brow that seemed already whitening with the mysterious chill of death. As he bent over her with words of consolation, suddenly she cried:

"Oh, there's William!"

The nurse, the neighbour, and even the old mother, sprang to their feet, looking in the direction of her glance, for it was apparent that she saw something.

"I told you we should all be together to-morrow," she cried, exultingly; "the earth has crushed his body—and still there it is, as beautiful as it was in life. Don't go, William!" she cried, holding out her arms, imploringly, "I am coming!" and died.

"For heaven's sake take this child!" exclaimed the neighbour; "I do believe it's going after its mother. Well, well, may I never see such another sight!"

Strange to say, the babe was already gasping out its little life, and in less than an hour both mother and child were robbed for the grave. So suddenly sometimes come desolation and blight. Who in that glorious dawning of the new day, now nearly passed, looked forward to this? Surely no one of that little community.

"I wonder if it ain't a'maist my time!" murmured the poor lonely old mother, in tones so sad as to bring tears to every eye. "It seems strange that an auld withered root like me should be left above the ground, when the young and healthy shoots are thrown away."

But so it was—God only knew for what purpose of his will.

Mrs. Williamson and her daughter sat waiting for the late train. The violence of their grief was now somewhat abated, but their pale cheeks and drooping eyes betrayed how much they both suffered.

"Even now it seems like a dream," said Alice. "I can't think him dead. Oh, mother, what shall we do without him?"

"Heaven only knows, my child!" cried her mother, with a bitter groan; "as for me, I shall follow him soon: it is you I mourn for, more than myself."

"Don't, don't!" cried Alice with a shudder.

"My poor child!" murmured the widow.

"I never knew half how dear he was," was the sister's next sobbing cry. "Oh, if we could only go back to yesterday. I am afraid I may have said something some time that wounded him; if I could only recall him for one little moment!"

"If we could only see him, even pale and cold," moaned the widow; "but, oh, for ever to be denied that blessing!"

"He was to have come home last night—oh! why did he not? It must have been that he was over-ruled to stay, and he staid to—his death. I wish she had never known him."

"Poor thing!" said the widow, in accents of pity, "we forget what her sufferings may be."

"She has known him but a few months—we all our lives; oh, can there be any comparison?"

"Poor child!" still moaned the widow, looking back to her own youth and strong, undying love, "we have not been thoughtful enough. What must her father have thought? We never spoke of her!"

"What is she to us?" cried Alice, almost pettishly; for before this she had not been pleased to find a rival in this new object of her brother's affection.

"My dear boy loved her," said the bereaved mother, weeping again. "I wish I had just spoken of her, poor girl! they say she is very ill, and they are afraid at the house that the shock will kill her."

"She is very young," murmured Alice.

"Only eighteen—and my poor boy loved her so! There are other sufferers, they say, a poor young woman whose husband was killed. She is dying; oh, if my boy had never had anything to do with that terrible mine!"

"This way, sir—this way, sir!" To their surprise, there entered the gentleman who had met them at the house of Mr. Conway. He seemed in quite a state of excitement, flourishing his handkerchief, wiping his forehead, and ahem-ing at a rapid rate, while his conscious look of importance only added to the singularity of his visit at that late hour.

"I have the honour, I believe, of speaking with Mrs. Williamson?"

The lady bowed her head.

"You are the mother, I presume, of that unfortunate accident—I mean—not unfortunate—that happened this morning?"

"Sir!" exclaimed the widow, severely, thinking that the man was not in his right senses.

"I should have said the accident that appeared to have taken from you your only son—the hope and stay of your declining years. Perhaps I should not have spoken of the accident," he went on, seeing by their faces that he had blundered into some strange mistake. "You will excuse me, madam," he continued, with more clearness, "but 'y the news I have heard is so strange that am about unhinged myself, I believe. It's rather awkward to tell you, thinking as you do, because I was particularly cautioned not to break it too sudden, but it's my humble opinion that your son did not go down the mine with the rest of the folks this morning."

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed both mother and daughter, springing from their seats. An angel could not have brought them more joyful tidings just then. "Why do you think so?" cried Mrs. Williamson, breathlessly.

"I have, I believe, the best of reasons," said the man, with a shy, cautious look, scanning their faces as if to see how they bore it. "I think—I believe I saw him this morning."

The widow gasped a little, and grew white, which made the strange gentleman look nervously at her.

"You think—you believe—oh, it might not have been him."

"But I am sure it was."

"Sure?"

"Sure—why, I ought to be—I spoke to him."

"Oh, you have opened heaven to us, almost!" cried the widow, while, from the intensity of her emotions, Alice could not speak. "Where did you see him—when—what did he say?"

"Well, he didn't say much, that's certain, only 'good-morning,' and 'it's a pleasant day;' he seemed flustered like, or in a great hurry. Any how, it was Williamson; I ought to know him pretty well; he and I have business connections. It was, let me see, about nine—he must have taken the first train down—and I was standing on the platform, where I was waiting for some friends."

"Oh, Alice! can it indeed be true?" asked the widow, her face glowing with sudden joy; "you were wishing just now it was but a dream—that is all it has been—a hideous dream—but, thank God, over now. Did you tell Mr. Conway, sir?"

"No, I'm on my way there," said the man placing his handkerchief in the crown of his hat. "I really didn't understand his remarks at all after you left this evening, because, you see, I'd yet no suspicion that Mr. Williamson was thought to be killed."

"Oh, mamma," cried Alice, with alacrity, "he will go to the house and find us gone; what will he do? Then he will learn what a dreadful thing we heard. We must get home some how."

"Impossible till the half-past ten o'clock train, ma'am," said the man, consulting his watch, "and it's now only a little after nine."

"Alice, I think we had better call and see that young lady," said Mrs. Williamson, quietly.

"Oh, yes, anything, I will do anything new brother is alive!" cried Alice, her cheeks glowing. "Let us drive immediately there."

"And the ten o'clock train in may bring him," said the stranger.

"What, my son? So it may," said the widow, joyfully. "He will at all events call at Mr. Conway's."

Mr. Conway was thunderstruck at the news; it stunned him; it took away his breath, he said; and then, at thought of his daughter the tears came to his eyes.

"She is so excitable, poor child, I hardly know how to tell her the good news. But are you sure, Jenkinson? It's too precious to doubt, yet almost too good to be true."

"Of course I'm sure," said the man; "and I think, before many hours, you'll have all the proof you want."

"But how to tell my darling?" said Mr. Conway. "She's so thoroughly exhausted by sorrow and the excitement."

"Let me take the office," said the widow, gently; "I came on purpose to see your daughter. I should have spoken of it before, but I was so sad, and despairing sorrow makes us selfish."

"Come," said Mr. Conway, feeling that woman's tact would avail even more than his affection.

So they followed him into Minnie's room. The curtains were drawn, but the girl's weary eyes were not closed—had not been.

"Here is a lady come to see you, darling," said her father.

She lifted her heavy glance, smiled a little, no curiosity in her face, and sighed heavily.

"My dear, I am Robert's mother," whispered a soft voice.

Her eyes opened wider, a fire and intelligence in them they had not displayed all that sad day. Suddenly her glance shot fire; she lifted herself, eyes aglow and lips parted; a vivid light illumined the colourless face; her hand was raised as if in warning.

"Father, it is his voice; he is coming for me."

A startling peal that echoed strangely through the silent house—a hasty step underneath the window—another peal, and the door flew open. No wonder the frightened servant screamed. Did the dead stand before her? Down the stairs, almost at a bound, went Mr. Conway.

"For God's sake, Robert Williamson, how came you here?" he cried, wringing his hand till the strong man winced.

"Minnie?" was all the reply he got then.

"She is better—saved; but you went to the mine this morning?"

"Very true; or rather I started with that intention; had reached the mouth of the mine, when my brother-in-law's boy, Bob, came up on horseback—had been riding since four in the morning. My brother was nearly killed, he said, in consequence of an accident, and I must hurry home immediately, if I would see him alive. This news drove everything else out of my mind. I bade poor Vatheigh tell you, or leave word at the house, took Bob's horse, and left him to return by the train, while I rode for the station. I found that my brother, though dangerously injured, was likely to survive, and I intended returning to-morrow. A few hours ago, however, I met a man from here, who told me of the accident. I divined the consequences instantly, took the eight o'clock train, which was just starting, and here I am."

"God be thanked! His name be praised for ever!" cried the grateful father, again and again; "and still I can't realize it. I've seen you dead all day. Surely I ought to be a grateful man. But come up-stairs—no no, that won't do; go seat yourself in there till I run up and tell them. She knows, though, Minnie does; wonder it didn't kill her, poor little flower!"

Looking out from a bath of cologne, not with dim eyes now, her fair hair drenched and all uncured, her lips red again, her cheeks painted with the crimson of hope, sat Minnie, no longer strengthless.

"Then the angels did guard him!" she cried, with glad triumph. "Oh, the wonder! the miracle! Papa, I'm nearly beside myself with joy. Ah! I'm afraid I shall be too happy again."

Aunt Ann was a changed woman. Wiping her eyes from time to time, and declaring she didn't know what the matter was with them, she bustled about, threw open the curtains, laughed, and almost danced in her joy.

As for Minnie, sudden strength had come with the sudden blessing, and not long after she sat in the same place where the night before the two chairs had been left in the parlour. Oh! the glad, glad embrace of the happy pair, saddened though it was by the memory of others' sorrow—the joyful meeting of mother and sister.

But why should I linger, save to say that Robert Williamson never went down in the mine again? Mrs. Williamson, it seemed, had spent the day at the house of a friend, in another town, leaving no word by which she might be found. After the immediate danger was over, it was resolved not to alarm her, and thus it happened that mother and son did not meet before. Ill news travels fast, and while preparing to return home they had heard of the accident at the mine, and consequently turned their course in that direction.

Thus Minnie Conway found what her heart had often yearned for, a loving mother, for it was not long before she became the happy wife of Robert Williamson.

M. A. D.

We hear from Naples that a comet has been noticed and already identified as that which made so formidable an appearance in 1811, and gave its name to the famous vintage of that year.

THE FLUSHING LUNACY CASE.—The charge against Samuel Porter, of Flushing, for ill-treating his lunatic brother, was tried at Bodmin, on the 17th ult. All the charges alleged were proved, it being shown that the lunatic was for eleven years kept by his brother in an outhouse naked, without fire or bedding, embedded in excrement, and without ever seeing a human face. His "legs were doubled up, his knees against his chest and his heels against his thighs, the feet being crossed one over the other; he apparently had no power to extend his limbs at all." He was "quite harmless and tranquil, with an innocent expression of face." The filth in the room filled eight barrows. No credited testimony was offered, except as to the usual gentleness of Porter's character, but the jury found him guilty with a recommendation to mercy. The

judge did not pass sentence, being anxious to consult his brethren on a curious point raised by defendant's counsel, viz., that the Act did not provide for persons in the custody of their relatives. The prisoner was therefore released on bail. The strangest fact in the case is, that it appears certain the keeper was a humane man, and that he and the jury together think imprisonment of this kind the only course for a lunatic. If he escapes, the effect all over the country will, we fear, be most disastrous.

DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT COINS.—A few days ago, while some of the labourers in the employment of Mr. Key, shipbuilder, Kirkcaldy, were engaged removing an embankment at the new shipbuilding yard near Kinghorn, they came upon an earthen jar, equal in size to a two gallon measure, full of old silver coins. The coins mostly belong to the reigns of the Edwards, intermixed with a few Scotch of the reigns of Alexander III., John Balliol, Robert Bruce, and David II. The latest date legible is 1375. The weight of the coins could not be less than 30lb. avoirdupois; and, counting 400 coins to the pound, the total number found in the jar would be over 12,000.

A GRAND FAMILY DINNER AT THE TUILERIES took place on Thursday evening, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Prince Imperial's eighth birthday. During the afternoon the pupils of the Guard and of the naval school at Brest, who had come to Paris, assembled to the number of 350 in the Galerie de Diane, where they partook of a collation. Their Majesties were present at this *fête*, which afforded great delight to the youthful guests. A review of the *enfants de troupe*, which was to have taken place in the courtyard of the Tuileries, has been postponed to Sunday. All the theatres were illuminated in the evening in honour of the anniversary.

THE COST OF A BOMBARDMENT.—Every shot of rifled artillery, according to the Prussian system, says a Berlin letter, costs at least £1 sterling. The works of Duppel being armed with 120 heavy guns, about 300 will be required to undertake the attack, each of which is expected to fire from 700 to 1,000 shots. At the lowest estimate, then, the cost of the bombardment must be set down at £120,000. In this, however, is not included the cost of the timber, the gabions, shovels, brushwood, &c. Then there is another heavy item, accruing from the transport of the guns and ammunition—300 24-pounders weighing no less than 30,000 cwt., while the ammunition required weighs five times as much.

SCENE IN A LONDON STREET.—A woman in rags, which flew from her limbs at every gust of wind, led a scarecrow child with tottering steps through the full tide of men and women, who shrank and let them pass. Behind her stalked famine itself in the guise of the most forlorn-looking being that could be conceived, who staggered literally under the burden of a girl of ten or twelve years of age, whose legs, not much thicker than candles, protruded from his emaciated arms across the faces of the passers-by. They were bound for the workhouse, but had been wandering all over London to find it. As near death as living and moving beings well could be, not one policeman had thought it necessary to ask them a question, to offer them information—in fact, to do anything but make them "move on."

SIR JOHN DEAN PAUL.—The *Madras Times* gives some curious information respecting the notorious fraudulent banker, Sir John Dean Paul. Immediately after he was sentenced to penal servitude, Lady Paul realized all the property settled upon her, and proceeded without delay to Sydney, where she purchased a beautiful seat in the suburbs. Her husband having arrived at a penal settlement in another part of Australia as one of a gang of convicts, the wife of the convict baronet applied to the government for his services, and was permitted to employ him as her "assigned servant." We need scarcely add, that having thus released him from unpleasant restraint, she placed all the newly purchased property in his hands, and has since led a very quiet life in his company.

OUR TRADE IN SWEETS.—In the year 1854 the total amount of confectionery made in this country did not exceed 8,000 tons per annum, whereas in 1862 the amount had risen to 25,000 tons per annum. The Messrs. Schoelling alone consumed between 400 and 500 tons of sugar, and 200 tons of gum arabic, and sent out 10,000 boxes containing sweets last year. As the trade has increased, many houses have adopted certain specialities. Thus, one establishment makes hundreds of tons of jams and marmalades in the year, another makes 150 tons of lozenges and comfits, a third nothing but medicated lozenges, another acidulated drops, which are an entirely English manufacture, not being known abroad. Then again, gum goods are specially produced by one house, &c. The English manufacturers, having set their shoulders to

the wheel, are fast distancing their foreign competitors. Hitherto great purity from noxious adulterations of sweets produced abroad has been in their favour, but now the English manufacturers are as free from these as those of their neighbours, whilst they do not, like them, use flour and other farina to bring up the colour of their comfits, a habit universally indulged in by continental manufacturers.

A NOVEL TARGET.—A target made of compressed wool, designed by Mr. Nasmyth, has been tried at Woolwich and failed. The first shot was fired from the Armstrong 100-pounder with a 10 lb. charge, and this not only passed through the target from end to end, but buried itself in the earth behind. A second shot was fired from the 68-pounder, with the usual service charge, and this also went through, burying itself in the bank.

WOMEN.

We gaze on the stars as they sparkle at night,
Nor mourn for the day-beams gone,
And we joy when the flowers in dew-drops bright
Are smiling as morn comes on.
Oh, women, women thus,
Are stars and flowers to us,
Ever cheering and guiding our way;
Shedding fragrance before us,
And ever bright'ning o'er us,
Giving life to the night and the day!
For woman, like stars that illumine the sky,
Can brighten the darkest hours;
And as flowers borrow lustre from heaven on high,
But flowers will die,
And stars of the sky
May not shine upon us for ever.
But though flowers decay,
And though stars fade away,
Woman's influence perishes never. J. J. S.

DIGGING UP SEEDS.

"THEY'LL never come up!" said the voice of a child. It was fretful and impatient. "They've been planted three days. I knew they wouldn't grow."

The little boy who thus complained was standing over a bed in the garden, where he had some flower-seeds. He had been there two or three times every day since the seeds were planted, hoping to see their first green shoots piercing the earth. Impatience could wait no longer. And now he commenced digging down to see if the seed had sprouted. Two or three were turned up, each with a small white germ breaking through the horny covering. He tried to put them back; but, in doing so, broke off the tender germs.

"What are you doing?" cried the child's mother, who came down one of the garden walks just at this time, and saw him uncovering the seeds which she had instructed him how to sow. There was a tone of anger in her voice. The child started; then frowned and pouted his lips.

"I knew they wouldn't come up," he said.

"What are you doing?"

The mother repeated her question sharply. Then seeing what had been done, she let her angry feelings have vent.

"You're a naughty, impatient child!" she exclaimed; "seeds don't come up in a night! Why couldn't you wait? Just see what you've done! There!—that seed has sprouted; and now it's good for nothing. You've ruined your garden! You're the silliest child I ever knew, and I am out of all patience with you."

What answer did the child make.

"I don't care!" And he ran on to the flower-bed, and trampled it with his feet. Blind passion was, for the time, his master.

The mother, stronger, but scarcely wiser than her child, caught him by the arm and almost dragged him into the house.

"You naughty, naughty boy," she said, "I'll punish you for this." And she put him into a room by himself, telling him that he should stay there alone until evening.

A friend, walking in the garden at the time, saw what passed between the child and his mother.

"Unwise, unwise," she said to herself. "What an opportunity for a lesson that her boy might never have forgotten!—but failing to improve the occasion, she has hurt instead of teaching him."

Soon after, the boy's mother and her friend were sitting together.

"Where is Harry?" asked the latter.

"I've sent him to his room," replied the mother.

"As a punishment?"

"Yes."

"What has he been doing?"

"Giving way to that passionate temper, which will, if not restrained, bring him one day into serious trouble."

And then she related the incident about the flower-seeds.

"We do not become very much wiser as we grow older," remarked the friend; "only our imperfect hands dig up the seed of higher things before they have time to germinate."

"I can remember," answered the mother, half-smiling, half-serious, "doing the same when a child—digging up seeds I had planted, to see if they were beginning to grow. I ought not to be severe with Harry; but then his impatient spirit must be checked, or it will rule him to his injury when he becomes a man. It was not because he dug up the seed, but because he trampled on his flower-bed, that I punished him."

"And are you wiser now than when you were a child?" asked the friend. "Are you not doing the same things to-day, only in a higher region of life?"

"What?"

"Digging up the good seeds you have planted in your child, and impatiently trampling on the flower-beds of his soul."

"Is this so? Are you in earnest?"

The mother's face grew very serious.

"May I talk plainly? Won't you be hurt or offended?"

"With you I can never be offended. I know your heart!" said the mother.

"I have been with you for a month."

"And a pleasant month it has been, my friend—pleasant and also profitable. You have helped me to perceive many things not perceived by my dull eyes before. You have strengthened my weak hands—you have confirmed my failing purposes. Your visit has done me good. And now, say on!"

"How many times in that month have I seen you repeat the incident of to-day?"

"What incident?"

"That of digging down impatiently into your child's mind, to see if the seeds you had planted were beginning to sprout."

"Have I been so blind?" she asked.

"So it has seemed to me."

"Will you come down to particulars? Then I can understand you better. Don't be afraid of hurting me. I love my boy. I wish to be a true mother. I feel, more deeply than I can express, my inability to guide him aright. He is wayward, impatient and passionate, and, do what I will, I fail to weaken these dangerous tendencies of his soul."

"It is because you do not see clearly. Unless there be a clear sight, how can there be a sure hand?"

"Help me to a clearer sight, my friend," said the mother. "Lift the scales from my eyes. Show me the true way."

"I read to-day in this book," answered the friend, lifting a small volume, entitled "Thoughts in my Garden," "a passage that seems written just for your case. Will you hear it?"

"Oh, yes. I am searching for light."

And the friend read:

"When a child begins gardening, he is so impatient to see the result of his work, that he is almost sure to dig up his seeds in order to find if they are sprouting. The parent looks on, and perhaps smiles complacently at the child's folly, bidding him be patient for a few days, till the little plants have time to show themselves. Yet it is quite probable that that very parent treats the seeds of thought he sows in the mind of the child, with an impatience just as foolish as that of the child over his flower-seeds. He tells him a truth, and expects it to spring up and bear fruit as soon as it is sown. He looks to reap the harvest in the character of his child before the seed-time is over. He probes his child's heart with questions to find out if the truth he sows is germinating before the warmth of the divine love has had opportunity to expand the germ and quicken it into life. He will not wait for the gradual way in which Divine Providence, through the ministry of circumstance, quickens the spiritual nature of the child; and then, by the rain of his truth and the sunshine of his love, causes the seeds sown, it may be, years before, and lying till then darkly and inert, to take root and grow, and bear fruit many fold."

"There is a time to plant," said the friend, as she closed the book; "a time in which the seed must be passive in the earth, hidden from sight, while germination takes place; a time for the spring blade—for the opening flower—for the ripening fruit and grain. For all the processes we must wait. If we look for the shooting blade before the period of germination is over, we shall be disappointed—if for ripe fruit in the spring-time of growth and development, our disappointment will be none the less sure."

The mother did not answer; but sat, with eyes cast down, lost in thought. A veil had dropped from her eyes, and now she saw things clearly that were hidden before; saw how, in her ignorance and impatience, she had been perpetually disturbing the earth of her

child's mind, and hindering the growth of the good seeds she had planted there.

After a few moments, she got up and left the room, without speaking. Shutting the door after her, as she went out, she ran quickly to the chamber in which she had shut up her boy, and went in upon him so suddenly, that he had no warning of her approach. She found him sitting on the floor, amid the contents of a toilette case, which she had received only a week before as a birth-day gift from her husband. Scent-bottles, sacketts, perfumed soaps, hand-mirrors, and all the elegant et ceteras of a lady's dressing-box, lay in disorder around him.

A pulse of anger sent the blood leaping along the mother's veins; her eyes flashed an indignant light; fierce words were on her lips; her hands shut in a convulsive grip. The child looked up with a frightened aspect.

What a moment of trial and peril! In the pause, a voice seemed to say:

"Beware!"

"What is Harry doing?" she asked, in a tone of gentle inquiry, as she sat down on the floor beside her child, and looked on him with motherly tenderness in her eyes.

Wonder took the place of fear in the child's countenance.

"I'll put them all back again," he said, in a penitent voice, turning to the articles scattered around him on the floor, and commencing to gather them up. "There isn't anything broken, mamma."

The mother had to restrain herself. She would have stayed the child's hand. But by help of the new light that had streamed into her mind, she saw that in doing so there was danger of hurting something of far more value than a perfumed bottle, or a mirror not two inches in diameter.

He had committed an error that he was anxious to repair. He was trying to put himself right with his mother by undoing a wrong.

"I was a naughty boy, and I'm so sorry!" he said, pausing in his work to look up at his mother, and read her state of feeling in her eyes.

"It was my birth-day present," answered the mother. "Father gave it to me." Her tones were serious, but not rebuking. "I should have been so grieved if anything had been broken."

"But there isn't anything broken, mamma—not the least bit of a thing. Oh!"

An ejaculation of pain closed the sentence, as a small Bohemian-glass bottle dropped from his hands and broke into fragments. His face grew instantly pale—his lips quivered—he lifted his eyes with a pleading look of fear and suffering.

The mother had to guard herself. She, as well as her boy, was passing through discipline.

"Oh, mamma!" cried out the child, in the overpowering grief of his little heart; and he hid his face among her garments and sobbed wildly.

The mother's heart had become very tender during the progress of this scene. How could she help putting her arms around her grieving boy, and weeping with him, and comforting him?

"Don't cry about it, darling," she said, with her lips against his cheeks. "You didn't mean to do it; and I can buy another bottle. If you won't touch my toilette-case again—"

"Oh, I'll never, never touch it again," he answered, eagerly. "I'm so sorry. And I'm sorry I dug up the seeds, mamma."

The mother caught her breath two or three times; then laid her hot cheek down among the golden curls of her boy, and held him tightly against her heart.

"Only be patient," said her friend, as they sat together not long afterwards. "The ground of a child's mind is good ground. If you fill it with good seeds, and let them lie there undisturbed by impatience or passion, they will surely germinate and grow. It is not because the ground is bad, but because it is so often dug over and trampled upon, that so little of greenness—so little of bud blossom—appear in the lives of children. Some seeds take the quickening impulse of nature in a few days, while others lie in the ground as if there were no centre of vitality in them for months. The wise gardener takes note of this difference, and waits the appointed time with unwavering confidence. We should be as wise as he in our human gardens; nay, wiser, for the flowers that bloom and the fruits that grow in them are far more precious."

T. S. A.

WHO ORIGINATED THE PENNY POSTAGE?—One of the London daily journals only last week permitted the insertion of a statement respecting the originator of the penny postage rate; but the information given was incorrect. The following is the fact:—William Dockura, a merchant of London, did not "set up" the penny rate in London for the collection and delivery of messages and parcels. This had nothing whatever to do with the Post-office. The party who did so was named Murray. He was an upholsterer, and com-

menced his private speculations in 1681. In 1683, Murray resigned his interest in the venture to Dockura; but in a trial at the King's Bench Bar, in the reign of Charles II., the right to circulate correspondence was adjudged to belong to the Duke of York, as part of the General Post; and in consequence it was then annexed to the Crown, and the revenues arising therefrom were made subject to the payment of pensions to favourites at court and other "distinguished personages." Dockura was compensated for his loss and made General "Controller," but for subsequent malversations of the funds he was eventually dismissed the public service.

THE TOMB OF KING JOSEPH, the eldest brother of Napoleon I., and formerly King of Spain, has just been completed at the Invalides, in the chapel to the right of the Emperor's tomb. The ex-king's remains will shortly be transferred to the new tomb from the vault in which they were deposited in 1862, when brought from Florence, where King Joseph died in 1864.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

As Ned Cantor left court, he cast a glance of hate towards his wife; but it quickly fell beneath the steadfast gaze of Margaret, who stood like a guardian angel by the side of her mother. There was neither anger, sorrow, nor contempt in the look of Lady Sinclair: it was simply cold indifference.

The convict felt, as he encountered it, that the last tie between them was broken; and his vindictive heart overflowed with bitterness and gall.

Quick and Phineas followed Ned from the court. The ex-baronet cursed, in his rage and disappointment, not only the memory of Lady Briancourt, but the counsels of his grandfather—by following which he had aroused the implacable resentment of the dowager, and compelled her, in self-defence, to hurl him from rank and fortune to that state of obscurity which he was so well fitted by nature to grovel in.

"It is all your doing!" he said, turning on the old man, with a bitter scowl; "this is the result of your precious scheming and fine-drawn plots! I am a beggar now!"

"Phineas—dear Phineas!" whispered the lawyer, in an apologetic tone.

"Without fortune or name!"

"Not without fortune!" continued his miserable relative. "I am rich—and all that I have, or can amass, will be yours?"

The recollection that the wealth of the speaker was now his only hope, and that that wealth was entirely at his own disposal, induced the young man to exercise a violent self-control over his bitter feelings, and he yielded to the entreaties of his grandfather to return with him to his home.

Ned Cantor, with fury flashing in his eyes and revenge burning in his heart, hastened round to the judge's entrance, where Mabel was being assisted into the carriage of Sir Cuthbert Sinclair by the baronet and Charles Briancourt. Fortunately, before he reached the spot, Mary and Margaret were already seated.

"Come with me!" said the ruffian, placing a strong grasp upon her shoulder.

The poor creature shrank with involuntary terror as she felt the contact of the hand which had already so cruelly oppressed her.

"Back, sir!" said his son-in-law, sternly; "you have lost all right of control over her by your inhuman treatment!"

"She is my wife!"

"She is my mother!" exclaimed Margaret, in a tone of indignation—"my dear, good, suffering mother—whom your cruelty has almost brought to the grave! Think you," she added, "I will permit her to return to Bordercleugh, to be again beaten, imprisoned—murdered, perhaps? Never—never!"

"Would you brave your father, minx?" demanded the convict, pale with passion.

"The world, in such a case!" replied the high-spirited woman. "Father!" she repeated, in a tone of contempt which stung Ned to the soul; "have you ever merited the name? What is the inheritance you have left your child?—infamy and reproach! As a husband and a parent you have broken every tie!"

"She is my wife!" repeated the ruffian, refusing to relinquish his hold; "you can't talk me out of that."

By this time a crowd had collected round. Many of the persons had been present in the court, and felt disgusted with the manner in which he had given his evidence: for once, popular indignation was on the right side.

At this instant the judge, who had disrobed, made

his appearance, followed by the officers of the court, who were attending him to his carriage: a few words informed him of what had taken place.

"Your reign of cruelty and oppression is over!" said Sir Cuthbert, firmly; "at once relinquish your purpose, or accompany Mr. Briancourt and myself to a magistrate! We have only to state the treatment inflicted upon the wife you have sworn to love and protect, at once to annihilate your misused authority over her!"

"I am quite ready, Sir Cuthbert," said his lordship, "to return and listen to any statement which your friend may feel called upon to make."

Ned recognized with dismay the grave voice which had so lately addressed him—involuntarily he released his hold, and sneaked away, amid the hootings of the indignant crowd.

The next moment Mabel was in the arms of Lady Sinclair and Mary.

"Should you experience any further annoyance, Sir Cuthbert," added the judge, "you know how to act."

"I have kept my oath," murmured the sufferer; "Mabel has not betrayed the trust reposed in her by the friend and benefactress of her youth. I can die now," she added, with a faint smile; "Ned may trample on me—imprison—beat me again—kill me if he likes—heaven, in its mercy, has granted me all I prayed to live for."

These broken words, which gave unmistakable evidence of the cruelties she had been subjected to, made Lady Sinclair and Mary shudder; but they repressed their indignation, for fear of prolonging the excitement which threatened the life of the speaker.

"Mother," whispered Margaret, kissing her clammy brow, "think of it no more. You are safe, quite safe, with me; you shall never quit me again."

On their arrival at the mansion of the baronet, in St. James's Square, Mabel was at once conveyed to the chamber which her daughter directed to be prepared for her.

The sisters both watched by her side till the opiate which Sir Henry Halford—who had been called in—prescribed took its effect; when they left her under the care of the housekeeper and Lady Sinclair's waiting-woman.

On entering the drawing-room, they found Bell and her brother waiting to receive them. Margaret embraced the former, and cordially gave her hand to the young farmer, whose heart beat wildly at the contact.

"Thanks, my dear friends," she said. "How can I sufficiently express my gratitude for your kindness to my dear, suffering parent?"

"By saying no more about it," replied Bell, with her usual frankness. "We have only done our duty. But tell me," she added, seeing that her brother was unable to speak, "how is Mabel—I mean Mrs. Cantor?"

The daughter of the convict shuddered; she remembered that it was the name of her father.

"She sleeps under the watchful care of Fannie, or I could not have quitted her, even to express my gratitude to you, to whom I am so deeply indebted. How can I repay the load of obligation?"

"By thinking of us sometimes kindly," stammered Frank Hazleton, at the same time blushing very deeply.

"With more than kindness," replied Lady Sinclair, unconscious of the pang she was inflicting—"with the love of a sister."

At the word "love," poor Frank's embarrassment increased: Mary observed it, and, with a woman's keenness, at once perceived the state of his heart.

"Frank," said his sister, as soon as they were alone, "we must at one return home—London is no place for you."

"Why not?" demanded her brother, trying to look as if he did not comprehend the drift of her speech.

"Because you still cherish a hopeless passion for Lady Sinclair. At present she is unconscious of your infatuation: should she discover it, she would despise you for your want of firmness."

"Not so!" exclaimed the young man; "she is too good to despise any but the mean or worthless—she would pity!"

"And pity, in a mind like hers," continued the rightly-judging girl, "would be so near akin to contempt, that it would require a casuist to discover the difference. It is unwise," she added, kindly, "to remain. There is no cowardice in flying from danger, when it can be honourably avoided. I should be sorry to see you sink in her esteem—still more in your own."

"You are right, Bell!" sighed the young farmer, after a pause; "you are always right! I can no longer have the happiness even of being of use to her. It is time that we should depart."

In pursuance of this resolution, the invitation to remain, which was repeatedly urged, was firmly but re-

spectfully declined; and, to the regret of all but Mary, on the following day both brother and sister took their leave of Sir Cuthbert and Lady Sinclair—but not till a promise had been extorted that they would one day visit them in the Highlands—a promise which Bell mentally resolved, as far as Frank was concerned, if she could avoid it, should never be kept.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

My plots fall short, like darts which rash hands throw
With an ill aim, and have too far to go;
Nor can I long discoveries prevent—
A deal too much among the innocent.

Sir Robert Howard.

DESPITE the disappointment he had endured at the downfall of his long cherished schemes for the aggrandisement of Phineas, Quirk, the morning following the trial, proceeded, at his usual hour, to his office in Serjeants' Inn. Although rich—very rich, for a professional man—his busy brain was plotting the means of augmenting his fortune for the sake of his grandson. Two chances presented themselves: one was connected with the will of the miser, Nicholas Arden—the other nearly affected the estate and title of Sir Cuthbert.

To accomplish his villainous schemes, the assistance of two persons was necessary—Ned Cantor and Harry Sinclair. The old man had given strict orders to the once more submissive Mr. Snape that he was visible only to either of these gentlemen.

"Tis here!" said the lawyer speaking to himself, and passing the index finger of his right hand athwart his wrinkled brow, "shadowy and confused; but still it is *here*! If Ned and the disappointed lover only continue in their present humour, I can work them like puppets to my will!"

"Come in!" exclaimed Quirk, his whole countenance brightening at the signal—which he knew announced the visit of one of the parties he felt at that moment most anxious to see.

The convict entered the room with a sullen air. He expected reproaches, and found himself agreeably mistaken. The lawyer received him with a friendly shake of the hand. The reason was plain—he had still a use for him.

"So, Ned," he said, "your wife, as usual, has outwitted you."

"Curse her!" muttered the convict, between his teeth; "she has been my ruin—a rock a-head to me through life!"

"And do you intend to remain content with cursing her?" continued the tempter. "Well," he added, after a pause, "it is perhaps the wisest plan. Mabel has played her cards well: her future life will be spent in ease and affluence, in the society of her daughter and the friends she has so faithfully served."

"Never!" roared Ned; "she is my wife—they can't deny that. I'll have her back, if I drag her by hair of her head from beneath the roof."

Quirk smiled: he was delighted to find his visitor in the very humour he wished.

"It's about her," continued the ruffian, "that I came to consult you! I am determined to have her back again. I'll go to law, if it costs me a thousand pounds. I could not die contented," he added, "if I thought that she and Meg were living happily together."

"My dear Ned," said the lawyer, half closing his eyes, and stretching out his legs—his usual attitude when about to pronounce what he considered an oracular opinion—"I am about to give you the strongest proof of friendship which one man can give to another—*do not go to law*."

His visitor opened his eyes very wide. Coming from Quirk, such a piece of advice really did appear like friendship.

"The law," continued the speaker, "is strong—very strong—where the rights of the husband are concerned; but unfortunately it has its limits. The suit would certainly be opposed by her friends."

"Let 'em oppose it. I don't care!"

"A counter-suit would be instituted," added the lawyer, "upon the ground of cruelty and improper sequestration from liberty—and the result would be a divorce!"

"A what?" demanded Ned.

"A divorce—a dissolution of your marriage," said his adviser; "which would not only separate you for ever from your wife, but enable her to choose another husband!"

Despite his anger at the unexpected light thus suddenly thrown upon the subject, the convict could not repress a smile at the idea it conjured up.

"Stop there, Quirk," exclaimed he; "the divorce, as you call it, may be all very well—but as for marrying again, pooh! Mabel would never think of such a thing!"

"Possibly not!" drily observed the lawyer; "in fact, I should say most probably not," he added.

When our readers recollect the misery she had en-

dured, and the brutal treatment she had been subjected to, they will doubtless be of the same opinion as the speaker.

"Your revenge must be accomplished by other means," continued Quirk.

For a few moments the two confederates in crime regarded each other in silence.

"What means?" slowly demanded Ned, at last. "You wouldn't have me—No; you are too prudent to advise that!"

"Of course I am, my dear Ned;" hastily answered the old man, replying to his thought rather than his words. "The means I should propose would be to separate them!"

"The very thing I desire," exclaimed the convict: "to take Mabel from her daughter—they would feel that."

"Would it not be better," suggested the lawyer, mildly, "to separate Lady Sinclair from her husband?"

"I'll do it by—"

We will not shock our readers by repeating the oath by which the heartless ruffian pledged himself to carry out the proposal of the tempter. The love he once bore his unhappy child was turned to hate—to bitter hate. Her marriage galled and stung him.

It was finally agreed that Quirk should that very day introduce him to Harry Sinclair, and that means should be concerted between them for the execution of their joint revenge.

"And now that we have arranged your affair," said the old man, with a smile of satisfaction, "I have a question to ask you, Ned, on my own account?"

"Ask away," replied his visitor.

"What became of the paper you abstracted from the possession of Dr. Briard, at Moretown Abbey? Come," he added, "it can be of no use to you—so you may as well oblige an old friend, and let me have it."

"I ain't got it."

The man of law looked at him incredulously.

"I tell you I ain't," continued the convict.

"I will give you as much as any one else for it—nay, more!" quietly observed the old man.

"I tell you again, I ain't got it!"

"And you expect me to believe you?" said Quirk.

"No I don't!" replied the convict; "for it's my belief that you don't believe anybody or anything."

"Have you parted with it?"

"No! It was taken from me!"

Ned proceeded to relate, in strict confidence, his adventure at the abbey, on the night he had obtained an entrance to the dressing-room of the countess: how he followed the Frenchman down the great staircase, across the hall, to his own room—the extraordinary apparition which had alarmed him—his terror and escape.

"There!" he said, when he had concluded his story.

"I have told you all, and perhaps have been a great fool for my pains—for I don't expect that you will give me credit for a word of truth. If I hadn't seen it I would not have believed it myself."

Strange as it may appear, the lawyer did believe him. Well knowing the plan of the house, he half suspected who the phantom really was, whose sudden appearance had, in all probability, saved the life of Dr. Briard, and so terrified Ned.

"Did the doctor see it?" he inquired.

"I don't know—but I think not!"

"Good!" thought the lawyer; "I will obtain possession of the will yet."

Ned drew his chair closer to that of Mr. Quirk. Few circumstances, during his long career of crime, had made so deep an impression upon him as the sudden and mysterious appearance of the countess: that it was a supernatural visitation he never for an instant doubted. He felt ashamed to acknowledge, even to himself, the terror it had occasioned him.

"Tell me," he said, "what do you really think of it?"

"Strange—very strange!" replied the old man, secretly anxious to confirm the convict in the opinion he had formed. "The fact is, Moretown Abbey is a very singular place: many transactions have occurred within its walls which will not bear the light of day!"

"So I should think!"

"There was Lady Frances," continued the speaker—"the great-aunt of the present earl—who, it is said, was murdered by her husband, who grew jealous of her. I have noticed her portrait a hundred times in the picture-gallery—a tall, dark woman, with a melancholy cast of countenance, and remarkably piercing black eyes."

"The very same!" whispered his visitor, with a shudder.

"Nonsense, Ned!" replied the lawyer; "she was dead before either you or I were born."

"It was no other!" exclaimed the convict; "I could swear to her."

Quirk felt perfectly satisfied—the description he had given of the pretended Lady Frances was that of the

imprisoned countess, who he now felt assured was the real phantom. Wishing to change the subject, he inquired of Ned whether he had any intention of returning to Borderleugh.

"No!" said the ruffian; "I am tired of the place. Besides, it will be so infernally lonely now."

"Would you have any objection to live abroad?"

"It would depend where."

"In one of the South American republics, for instance," continued Mr. Quirk. "Fine climate—all the luxuries of life—everything cheap! Government is sending out consuls to most of the ports: with the Earl of Moretown's interest, you might easily get appointed. Or, if that is too far, at one of the ports of the Mediterranean."

Ned scratched his head, and muttered something about his being no scholar, and about the duties of such an office.

The lawyer looked at him with a pitying smile.

"Scholar! Duties!" he repeated; "my dear friend, how very little do you know the world! What, in heaven's name, do you suppose clerks were invented for? You can write your name, and that is quite sufficient. It is only an idea," he added, "but it may be worth consideration—as, in the event of your succeeding in separating your daughter from her husband, you could no longer reside at Borderleugh, or, in fact, in England: Sir Cuthbert would spare neither money nor interest to discover your abode!"

"Say no more!" interrupted Ned; "I'll go anywhere—do anything—provided it leads me to the gratification of my revenge. They have scorned and trampled upon me: I'd give my last guinea to be enabled to turn and sting them."

So saying, he rose to depart, promising to meet Quirk that same night at his private residence, in order to be introduced to Harry Sinclair.

"He must leave England," thought Quirk, as soon as he was alone, "to render all secure. The fellow has plenty of money, and can live anywhere; as to the earl he will be only too happy to get rid of him. My first speculation is in excellent train; by and bye I shall have time to attend to the second. One thing at a time," he added; "one thing at a time!"

At the meeting held that same night, at the speaker's private residence, Harry Sinclair, whose fortunes were daily becoming more desperate, readily entered into the scheme which the wily lawyer proposed. He and Ned perfectly understood each other. A mutual arrangement was made, but neither bond nor deed passed between the parties: to secure the fulfilment of its conditions, they had better security than parchment could give—that of mutual crime.

The nature of their compact will appear in the progress of our tale.

About a week afterwards, the former lover of poor Margaret left London for Portsmouth. He had read in the *Times* an advertisement for the sale of a yacht—a regular American clipper—his intentions were to become the owner of it. A few days after his arrival the purchase was concluded, for fifteen hundred pounds—Quirk supplying the funds.

He had obtained possession of the vessel—his next object was to man her with a crew upon whose fidelity, even more than seamanship, he could depend: a necessity which detained him in the place for some time longer than he anticipated.

Among the persons to whom he applied was an old Dutch sailor, well known in Portsmouth by the name of Hans. The fellow kept a small public-house, which served as a general rendezvous for the sailors and idlers on shore. If a man wanted to cut from his ship, Hans—provided he had money—was always ready to assist him. A captain who required a dozen extra hands could generally obtain them through the same agency. With the trade of a publican, he united the double callings of crimp and smuggler. He was at first extremely cautious in his communications with the new owner of the *Bella Donna*, suspecting that the revenue authorities, who had long had an eye upon him, were planning some scheme to entrap him.

"I can't make him out," the Dutchman used to say; "but he must be as sharp as a weasel to catch Hans asleep."

By slow degrees, however, something like confidence became established between them. Without explaining exactly why he required a crew of picked men—if possible, runaway sailors from the men-of-war in the harbour—Harry Sinclair contrived to prove that he had no hostile view toward him—and that was all the old Dutchman required: once satisfied upon that point, he entered heart and soul into his wishes—for the gentleman skipper—as he called him—paid liberally.

He had already supplied him with two men who had cut from his Majesty's ship, the *Revenge*—a noble three-decker, just ordered upon foreign service, and only waiting the arrival of its new commander to sail.

"Well, Hans," said his visitor, as he entered the little sanctum of the *Flying Dolphin*, "any news?"

"Not very good," replied the landlord; "it is only a poor pig!"

Harry looked dissatisfied. "But he has been to sea," continued the crimp, "and, it appears, has no friends in the world but an old voyager. He can't like to go any more to sea for long voyage, but will engage with you for short trip."

"Is he strong?"

"Yes," answered Hans, deliberately; "he is strong enough—but you shall see him, and not buy a pig—as you Englishers say—in a poke! I will call him!"

Giving a low, peculiar whistle, it was answered from the left above. A few minutes afterwards, a strong, active lad, of about sixteen, slid, rather than walked, down the ladder. There was a shrewdness and intelligence in his countenance which impressed the owner of the Bella Donna favourably.

"What is your name, my lad?" he said.

"Willie, sir!" replied the boy, pulling his forelock by way of a salute.

"And your age?"

"Sixteen."

"You have run from your ship?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why? Did they ill-use you?"

"No, sir! but I am anxious to return to my poor old mother, who does not know whether I am living or dead! The Revenge is ordered for foreign service, and only waits the arrival of her captain, or I would have waited till she was paid off. Hans tells me that you will only require my services for a few months; if you engage with me, I will do my duty honestly!"

"Well, my lad," replied Harry Sinclair. "I rather like your appearance and your manner of expressing yourself! but tell me what is the name of your new commander?"

"Captain Vernon, sir!"

(To be continued.)

A FAIRY PICTURE.

"FANCY to yourself a great Troll-garden, such as our forefathers dreamed of often fifteen hundred years ago; a fairy palace, with a fairy garden; and all around the primeval wood. Inside the Trolls dwell, cunning and wicked, watching their fairy treasures, working at their magic forges, making and making always things rare and strange; and outside the forest is full of children; such children as the world had never seen before, but children still: children in frankness and purity, and affectionateness, and tenderness of conscience, and devout awe of the unseen; and children, too, in fancy, and silliness, and ignorance, and caprice, and jealousy, and quarrelsomeness, and love of excitement and adventure, and the mere sport of overflowing animal health. They play unharmed among the forest beasts, and conquer them in their play: but the forest is too dull and too poor for them; and they wander to the walls of the Troll-garden, and wonder what is inside.

One can conceive easily for oneself what from that moment would begin to happen. Some of the more adventurous clamber in. Some, too, the Trolls steal and carry off into their palace. Most never return; but here and there one escapes out again, and tells how the Trolls killed all his comrades, but tell, too, of the wonders he has seen inside, of shoes of swiftness, and swords of sharpness, and caps of darkness; of charmed harps, charmed jewels, and, above all, of the charmed wine: and, after all, the Trolls were very kind to him—see what fine clothes they have given him—and he struts about awhile among his companions; and then returns, and not alone. The Trolls have bewitched him as they will bewitch more.

So the fame of the Troll garden spreads; and more and more steal in, boys and maidens, and tempt their comrades over the wall, and tell of the jewels, and the dresses, and the wine, the joyous maddening wine, which equals men with gods; and forget to tell how the Trolls have bought them, soul as well as body, and taught them to be vain, and lustful, and slavish; and tempted them, too often, to sins which have no name. But their better nature flashes out at times. They will not be the slaves and brutes in human form, which the evil Trolls would have them; and they rebel, and escape, and tell of the horrors of that fair foul place.

And then arises a noble indignation, and war between the Trolls and the forest children. But still the Trolls can tempt and bribe the greedier or the more vain; and still the wonders inside haunt their minds; till it becomes a fixed idea among them all to conquer the garden for themselves, and bedizen themselves in the fine clothes, and drink their fill of the wine.

Again and again they break in: but the Trolls drive them out, rebuild their walls, keep off those outside by those whom they hold enslaved within; till the boys grow to be youths, and the youths men, and still the Troll-garden is not conquered, and still it

shall be. And the Trolls have grown old and weak, and their walls are crumbling away. Perhaps they may succeed this time—perhaps next.

And at last they do succeed—the fairy walls are breached, the fairy palace stormed—and the Trolls are crouching at their feet, and now will be theirs, gold, jewels, dresses, arms, all that the Troll possesses—except his cunning."—*The Roman and the Teuton, by Rev. C. Kingsley.*

FRACAS IN A LONDON THEATRE.

IN 1721, half-a-dozen tipsy beaux, with one among them of the degree of an earl, who was wont to be tipsy for a week together, raised a riot, to avenge an affront, in the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

His lordship crossed the stage, while Macbeth and his lady were upon it, to speak to boon companions who were lolling in the opposite wing. There, too, stood Rich, the manager, who told the peer that after such an act of indecorum, he should never be admitted behind the scenes again.

The earl looked up, and steadying himself, administered to Rich a smart slap on the face, which Rich returned with interest. Swords flashed forth in a minute from half-a-dozen scabbards, whose laced and lordly owners solemnly decreed that Rich must die. But Quin, and Ryan, and Walker rushed to the rescue, with their own weapons naked in their hands.

With aid of some other members of the company, they made front, charged the coxcombs, and drove them headlong out at the stage door and into the kennel. The beaux waxed wroth; but executing a great stratagem, they stormed the front of the house, and rushing into the boxes, they cut and thrust right and left, broke the sconces, slashed the hangings, and were proceeding to do further mischief—"Fire the house!" was ever a favourite threat with these bullies—when doughty Quin and a body of constables and watchmen flung themselves on the rioters, and carried all that they caught before the magistrates, by whom they were committed for trial.

Ultimately the affair was compromised; but there is evidence that the actors were intimidated, inasmuch as they issued a declaration that they would "desist from acting till proper care be taken to prevent the like disorders for the future."

The house was closed for nearly a week; and to prevent such outrages in future the angry king, who took an interest in theatrical matters, ordered that a guard should attend during the performances at either house. This was the origin of the attendance of soldiers—a custom which ceased at the patent theatres only a few years since—*Their Majesties' Servants. By Dr. Doran.*

THE RELIGION OF THE SPANIARDS.

IN general, the Spaniards have ceased to be Catholics; they are divided into two great classes, Deists and Infidels, and the majority are indifferent to divine worship.

Of the two classes, the former say they believe in a Supreme Being, of whom, however, they have no definite notion. They believe in neither the miracles, nor the prophecies, nor the Virgin, nor any of the mysteries of the Catholic Church. The latter do not believe in anything whatever, and both classes are so far alike that, for the most part, they do not trouble themselves about questions which have not the slightest effect on their conscience. Deists and infidels are subdivided and intermingled with each other, and of the groups thus formed that of the hypocrites is the most numerous.

From motives of personal interest, in order to stand well with their neighbours, to get an appointment, or to avoid the risk of losing one, people imitate the men at the head of affairs, and, as they see that these play the hypocrite, follow their example by joining pious fraternities, purchasing tickets for the communion, or even attending it without confession.

Other hypocrites frequent the service of the church, that they may not shock the prejudices of their wives or mothers. Indeed, hypocrisy, that genuine daughter of indifference and unconscientiousness, is universal; raging especially among the rich and in the middle class.

"As far as we are concerned, religion is superfluous. We laugh at such weakness; but the people must have a religion, and we must set them a good pattern." This is the language of the opulent, and more particularly of the men in office; but the people neither understand hypocrisy nor believe in the New Catholic (Ultramontane) missions, which are intended to make a profit out of them; and when they see a Necedal, with every show of piety, kissing the ring of Archbishop Cirillo before he takes his place in the Senate, they laugh aloud, or are simply indignant.

The larger portion of genuine Catholics in Spain belong to the dissolute portion of society. The thieves, the loose women, and other ill-livers, bedizen

themselves with relics, set up altars in their houses, and light wax-tapers before the images of saints. Indeed, in all the abodes of vice, a vessel of holy water, a crucifix and a Virgin are certain to be found.

Such is not the case with the great mass of operatives in the towns, even with a large portion of the middle class, which is composed of honest and estimable persons, in whom the church, the clergy, and all that belongs to them inspire nothing but contempt and abhorrence.

Of these two classes a tenth part at most attend church and confession, and even these are not actuated by religious motives. The external pomp of the service, the music, the singing, the flowers, the silk, the gold, and the jewels with which the images are decorated, all this works upon the senses; and a number of people go to church both to see and to be seen.—*The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World; or, the History, Geography, and Antiquities of Chaldaea, Assyria, Babylon, Media and Persia.*

LONGEVITY IN KENT.—Our obituary of to-day contains the names of thirteen persons who have died in Kent within the last few days—not in any way selected, but which have reached us for insertion in the ordinary manner—and whose united ages amount to 1,096 years, the average being within a fraction of 85. The youngest was in his 80th, and the eldest in his 102nd year; while two other persons not resident in the county were of the respective ages of 87 and 91. In each of the two preceding weeks we had to notice the deaths of Kentish centenarians—one having completed his 100th birthday on Christmas-eve, and the other having lived 101 years and 11 months.

A BIRTHDAY GATHERING.—At night we all went in the same train. The Duke of Newcastle had got drunk for our sins; so the princess's ladies had no places, but stood in the heat and crowd all the night. The Duchess of Shrewsbury downright scolded about it, and he told her for conclusion, that places were provided for the princess's family, which they did not keep, but that ladies of the town came and took them. "I was not his fault; and he could not turn out ladies of the town for us. There was so great a crowd, and we were so ill-used, that four of us went away, and left only Lady Dorset in waiting. It was plain we were to be used thus; and I am almost tempted to think it was also one of the doughty articles of reconciliation. Kendal and Kielmansegg very civil to me. Newcastle stood before me both morning and night. If I had not seen his face, I should have known it had been him, it being his peculiar ever to turn his back upon those he has any obligation to.—*Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714-1720.*

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PARIS HOSPITALS.—The physicians attending the Hospital Cochin in Paris, having observed for some years past several cases of puerperal fever among the women there, and of which they have not been able to discover the cause, have determined to make a change in the arrangements. They have resolved that the wards devoted to female patients shall be occasionally closed; that is, when a ward shall have been occupied for several months, it shall be left vacant for some time and exposed to a current of air. In order to assist in carrying out this arrangement, the Municipal Council of Paris are about to build a large addition to the hospital. The new building is to contain four wards for women. Three only of them are to be occupied at a time, and one left vacant. Another improvement is about to be introduced into the Paris hospitals. A sitting-room is to be attached to each dormitory, so that when a patient is sufficiently recovered to leave his bed he may have a place to read or to play at some innocent game, such as chess or draughts. Besides assisting in a perfect recovery of the convalescents, this plan will enable the patients confined to their beds to enjoy more quiet.

THE BIG TREES IN CALIFORNIA.—There have been many loose statements made concerning the size and age of the mammoth trees in Tuolumne county, California. A letter from an eminent scientific gentleman, who has lately visited them, gives us some reliable information, which we condense. They are situated on high, cool territory (5,000 feet above the sea level), and the spot is a favourite summer resort alike for this fact and to see the trees, and is much crowded in July and August. The big tree cut down—and a fair specimen of the monsters—is twenty-three feet in diameter where cut off six feet from the ground, and perfectly sound. Over this base a pavilion has been erected, and it makes a large and elegant saloon for dancing, social parties, and even literal stump-speaking. A section of the upper part of the trunk makes the bed of a bowling-alley. Our correspondent devoted the most of one day to counting the rings in the wood of the trunk, in order to ascertain exactly the age of the

tree; and he found twelve hundred and fifty-five of them at thirty feet above the ground, as the tree stood. The outside layer of one hundred years of growth occupied but three inches, and the inner centuries from three to ten and even thirteen inches each. The rings denote the years of life or growth; and though it has been always claimed that these trees were three thousand years old, there has been no exact data for the assertion; and this examination proves that this individual one—and probably as old as any—was not more than twelve hundred and fifty-five years.

A WILD CAT.—The other day, Mr. Alexander Fraser, gamekeeper, shot a wild cat in the Port Blair Forest. The animal weighed 12 lb. 7 oz., and measured 8 ft. 10 in. in length.

A DRAWING-ROOM ORNAMENT.—It is stated that Field-Marshal von Wrangel has sent to the Crown Princess of Prussia a Danish cannon-ball which fell near to the Crown Prince while he was making a reconnaissance, and that her Royal Highness has caused the ball to be placed in her drawing-room at the Potsdam Palace.

THE MINISTERIAL WOODEN SPOON.—A list of the votes of those members of the Government who are in the House of Commons is produced at the White-bait Dinner, and he who is lowest on the list is regarded, by his Cambridge friends at least, as the wooden spoon. During the administration of Sir Robert Peel, when the ministerial party was starting for Greenwich, one of them, in passing through Hungerford Market, bought a child's penny mug and a wooden spoon. After dinner, when the list of votes had been read out, the penny mug, on which was painted either "James" or "For a Good Boy," was presented, with all due solemnity, to Sir James Graham, and the wooden spoon to Sir William Follett.—*Notes and Queries.*

HOW THE OLD EARLS OF NORTHUMBRIA DIED.

Of the eighteen Earls of Northumberland, the first three were slain; the fourth, Cospatrik, died in exile; the fifth was beheaded; the sixth, who was also Bishop of Durham (Walcher), was murdered. (This prelate earl was roasted alive by the men of Gateshead, while on one of his tax-gathering "visitations"—a warning to all future Gateshead tax-collectors.)—The seventh (the Norman Alberic) was deprived, and pronounced "unfit for the dignity;" the eighth died a prisoner for treason; the ninth and tenth hardly came into the account, for they were Henry and Malcolm, princes of Scotland, who were a sort of honorary Earls of Northumberland; the eleventh earl was the old Bishop Pudsey, of Durham, who bought the earldom for £11,000, but was subsequently deprived of it and thrown into prison.

Then came the Percys. The first earl of that house, but the twelfth in succession, after the death of his son Hotspur, at Shrewsbury, was himself slain in battle; the thirteenth earl fell at St. Alban's, the fourteenth at Towton, the fifteenth at Barnet, the sixteenth was murdered, the seventeenth was the first to die a natural death, the eighteenth left no children. He, indeed, left a brother; but Sir Thomas Percy was attainted, and his honours became extinct.

The son of Sir Thomas was restored in blood and title after Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, was beheaded; but the restored earl was himself beheaded in 1572. It was his nephew, Earl Henry, the husband of Dorothy, one of the sisters of Essex, who suffered fifteen years' imprisonment in the Tower, and was mulcted in a fine of £20,000, not so much because he failed to prove that he was not concerned in the Gunpowder Plot, as because the Percy who was actively engaged in it was his kinsman and servant. He was the last earl of his line who suffered personal constraint; and in his grandson, Joceline Percy, the male line became extinct in 1670.

THE FAMOUS DUCHESS OF GORDON.

The greatest family in the north sixty years since was the ducal family of Gordon. Early in life Alexander, the fourth duke, married Jane Maxwell, "the flower of Galloway," and a handsome couple has rarely been seen. The duke was in his twenty-fourth year, the bride in her twenty-first.

Reynolds, in a fine portrait that still graces Gordon Castle, has preserved some memorial of the youthful beauty of the duchess, in which intelligence was mingled with sensibility and tenderness. A lovelier profile never was drawn: the woman of whom so many tales are related, representing her as scheming, worldly, and gross, might have sat for a Saint Cecilia or a Theresa. And there were passages in the life of Duchess Jane that wore the hues of poetry and romance.

As a girl she was strongly attached to a young officer, who reciprocated her passion. The soldier,

however, was ordered abroad with his regiment, and shortly afterwards was reported dead. This was the first great calamity that Jane Maxwell experienced; and after the first burst of grief had spent itself, she sank into a state of listlessness and apathy that seemed immovable. But the Duke of Gordon appeared as a sutor, and, partly from family pressure—partly from indifference, Jane accepted his hand.

On their marriage-tour the young pair visited Aytoun House, in Berwickshire, and there the duchess received a letter addressed to her in her maiden name, and written in the well-known hand of her early lover. He was, he said, on his way home to complete their happiness by marriage. The wretched bride fled from the house, and, according to the local tradition, was found, after much search, stretched by the side of a burn nearly crazed.

When she had recovered from this terrible blow and re-entered society, Jane presented an entirely new phase of character. She plunged into all sorts of gaiety and excitement; she became famous for her wild frolics, and for her vanity and ardour as a leader of fashion.

She shone at the balls and musical suppers of Edinburgh, leading the poet Burns one season in her train. In London her routs and assemblies were the most brilliant of the capital, attracting wits, orators, and statesmen.

When her family grew up, she found fresh occupation and interest in chaperoning her daughters, and stimulating the ambition of her favourite son, the Marquis of Huntly. It was chiefly through her exertions that her son was able to raise a regiment for general service.

In order that the ranks of the 92nd, or Gordon Highlanders, might be filled up, and Huntly obtain his command, she had been known to recruit in kilt and hose, bonnet and feathers, dancing with and kissing parties of half-mad mountaineers! No Cameron or Macpherson could resist this—the recruiting was eminently successful.—*Scotforth Papers.*

THE SHAKESPEARE TERCENTENARY COMMEMORATION.

"If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps," wrote Shakespeare, some three hundred years ago. But in thus expressing an opinion as regards posthumous fame, the "myriad-minded man," the great Poet,—has proved to be but an indifferent prophet, at least in his own case, for posterity has built up to him a magnificent and unequalled monument of fame. True, indeed, that he himself supplied all the materials, and laid the broad foundation on which the superstructure of his fame has arisen; but posterity, in building up his "monument" from his works, has shown how ready it was to recognize his claims to greatness and do honour to his memory.

For three centuries the minds of mankind have done homage to his transcendent genius; and now that the three-hundredth anniversary of his birthday has arrived, there is no sentiment so strong in the breasts of his countrymen—the heirs of his greatness—as the anxiety to give to his memory some fresh and fitting mark of honour.

War may rage through the world; one continent may be shaken with the thunderous roar of cannon, and its soil be steeped in fratricidal blood; on another, tyranny and despotism may make barbarous use of their giant strength to crush a gallant people here, to unjustly assail a brave little nation there; and the horrors of mortal strife may be ready to fill many lands with bloodshed and mourning; but here—here, in this happy England of ours—we have no alarms or apprehensions of this kind. We are at peace, and striving to remain so; and our only anxiety is that due honour shall be done, on the 23rd of this month of April, to the memory of the great Englishman, William Shakespeare—our Shakespeare—our "sweet Will,"—but the Shakespeare whose name is loved and venerated by the whole civilized human race, and will be so until the end of all things.

The manner in which the tercentenary birthday of the immortal dramatist is to be celebrated in the metropolis and at Stratford-on-Avon, has been at length agreed on; but we will not here enter into particulars, and need only mention that there are to be Shakespearean dramatic and musical performances, and that a noble monument is to be raised to the dramatist in the Green Park. We shall have something to say on these matters in subsequent numbers; but at present confine ourselves to giving a biography of the world's greatest bard, and a notice of one or two localities of his birthplace.

Shakespeare was born at Stratford-upon-Avon on or about the 23rd of April, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, the son of a small farmer in the neigh-

bourhood, settled at Stratford, and is variously described as glover, grazier, woolstapler, and even butcher. On the maternal side our poet was certainly of gentle blood, his mother, Mary Arden, being descended from an ancient and considerable family in Warwickshire, the pedigree of which Dugdale traces uninterruptedly up to the time of Edward the Confessor. William Shakespeare is generally believed to have been born at the house in Henley Street, still preserved, where his father resided during the whole of his Stratford life. Nothing is certainly known of him till the year 1582, or thereabouts, when we have pretty clear evidence that he took to wife Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a yeoman in the neighbouring hamlet of Shottery. The offspring of this union were a daughter, Susanna, who was born in May, 1583, and a boy and girl, twins, named Hamnet and Judith, whose baptism took place on the 2nd of February, 1584-85. The received impression among those who have busied themselves with his biography is, that Shakespeare left Stratford a year or so after the birth of his twins. But this is mere hypothesis. We know that he was in London a few years subsequently; but we have to learn whether the migration was solitary, as it is usually represented to have been, or whether any portion of his family accompanied him; and we have scarcely any clue to the motives which led to a change so marvellous in its consequences to humanity at large. Our own opinion is, that he quitted his native town shortly before or very soon after Hamnet and Judith were born; that he left it in the first instance unaccompanied by any of his family; and that his two brothers, Richard and Edmund, followed him to London and made the stage their profession, many years afterwards, when the poet had won a position which enabled him to secure them occupation in his own company of actors. Here we stop. Of the circumstances which induced him to leave his home, his parents, his wife, children, and other relatives, all is vague tradition or uncertain speculation: for we cannot regard in any other light the story of his having left his home in hot haste to escape the consequences of certain depredations which he had been detected in making, with other youngsters, upon the preserves of his powerful neighbour, Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote.

Of Shakespeare's movements for some years after he is believed to have quitted Stratford, we know literally nothing. Upon the faith of a nondescript memorial, purporting to be addressed by the players of the Blackfriars theatre to some person of authority in 1589, which Mr. Collier published as a document found among Lord Ellesmere's papers at Bridgewater House, he would appear to have at once joined the chief theatrical company in London, and at the date of the petition to have been a sharer or proprietor therein. It is not at all improbable that Shakespeare joined the company in question very soon after reaching London, and it is possible that he obtained a share in it as early as 1589; but the document we refer to can no longer be received as evidence to any events in his career, since our best paleographers have pronounced it to be a modern forgery.

The silly story first printed by Shiels in his "Lives of the Poets," 1753, of Shakespeare having maintained himself for some time at the outset of his career in the metropolis "by taking care of the gentlemen's horses who came to the play," may be dismissed at once as a contemptible figment. The association of actors which he is understood to have joined was that called the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, or the Queen's Players, who some years before had obtained a license "to use, exercise, and occupy the art and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, interludes, &c., in the city of London, as well as elsewhere." Upon obtaining this privilege they took premises in the precincts of the dissolved Blackfriars monastery—a spot still called Playhouse Yard—and converted them into the rude theatre where many of Shakespeare's pieces were first performed. His original connection with the stage was doubtless as an actor, but of his qualifications in this art we are uninformed.

The earliest allusion to Shakespeare in his capacity of poet yet discovered, is believed to be in Spenser's "Tears of the Muses," published in 1591. But the year following the publication of Spenser's poem affords us an undeniable reference to him. In the autumn of that year, in a miserable lodging at the house of a poor shoemaker near Dowgate, died Robert Greene, one of the most facile and popular authors of the time. This unhappy man is said to have spent the last few days of a profligate existence in writing a pamphlet, which he quaintly entitled "A Groat's Worth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance." In this tract, published shortly after his death by Henry Chettle, we find the following words, supposed to have been addressed to Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele:—"Ye, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygrys' heart wrapt in a player's hyde, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being

an absolute Johannes FACTOTUM, is in his own conceits, the only SHAKESPEARE in a country." This passage is obviously levelled at Shakespeare; and the charge against him is, that he had remodelled plays originally written by Greene and his companions, and produced them as his own. This is apparent as well from the play on his name as by the words "his Tygre's heart wrapped in a player's hide," which parody a line, probably Greene's—"Oh tyger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide," which Shakespeare has introduced in the third part of *King Henry VI.*, from *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of York*.

A year after Greene's death, our author's "Venus and Adonis" appeared; and in 1594 his "Lucrece," each being dedicated to the Earl of Southampton. About this period, too, Spenser's pastoral, entitled "Colin Clouts Come Again," was issued from the press. The dedication to Sir Walter Raleigh is dated December 27, 1591; but that date is now known to be an error of the printer. In this poem, after enumerating under fanciful appellations several contemporary characters of note, the author writes:

"And there, though least not least, is Etion;
A gentler shepherd may no where be found;
Whose munes, full of high thoughts' invention,
Doth, like himselfe, intercalously sound."

A passage which it is scarcely possible to doubt applied to Shakespeare, and which affords a gratifying proof of his eminence at this period. Not long subsequent to the time we are dwelling on, the company to which our author belonged began to alternate their performances—acting at the new playhouse called the Globe, on the Surrey side of the Thames in summer, and at their old theatre in Blackfriars during winter.

The third of the delusive documents, alleged to be a note from one "Rich. Vesle" to Henslowe, found by Mr. Collier in the Allyn collection of God's Gift College, Dulwich, has, like the petition of the Blackfriars malcontents, foiled all who sought for it.

Proceeding onward a year or two from the opening of the Globe Theatre, the interval affording us no authentic record of the poet, save the sad one of his son's death in 1596, we reach a period when it may be reasonably thought that Shakespeare was in the full tide of fortune and renown. The testimony of a divine, named Francis Mere, assures us that by 1598 he had produced, besides the poems of "Venus and Adonis," "Lucrece," and the "Sugred Sonnets," at least twelve of his incomparable plays. On the chronological order of our poet's dramas there is no evidence more important than that of Mere. It occurs in his "Palladis Tamia; or, Wit's Treasury," written and published in 1598:—"As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy among the Latines, so Shakespeare among the English is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage. For comedy witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*; his *Errors*; his *Love Labours Lost*; his *Love Labours Won*; his *Midsummer Night's Dream*; and his *Merchant of Venice*. For tragedy, his *Richard II.*; *Richard III.*; *Henry IV.*; *King John*; *Titus Andronicus*; and his *Romeo and Juliet*."

His acquaintance with the Earl of Southampton would by this time have ripened into cordiality; and with his splendid popularity, his colloquial powers, and his amiable and convivial disposition, the society of William Shakespeare would be coveted in the most brilliant circles of the town. He was the great luminary of that famous knot of *beau esprits* originally established by Raleigh at the Mermaid in Bread Street; a club which numbered among its members—besides Shakespeare—Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Selden, Cotton, Donne, and a host of kindred spirits. In pecuniary circumstances also—too often the bitter potion in the poet's chalice—his lot was enviable. From his incomings as an author, an actor, and a sharer in two flourishing playhouses, he must have acquired an easy competence. If there is truth in the constant tradition that Lord Southampton's admiration of his genius was such, that at one time his munificent patron "gave him a thousand pounds to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to," we should conjecture the time when this gift was made to be that we are upon, and the "purchase," the "Great House," afterwards called "New Place," and certain land at Stratford. The fact, too, that his father, in 1597, commenced a suit in chancery, and tendered the redemption money, £40, to recover the estate of Ashbies, may be taken as a proof of Shakespeare's prosperity, since it is more than probable he found means for the purpose. Another circumstance may be thought significant of the same conclusion. It was shortly before this date that the elder Shakespeare obtained from the Herald's college confirmation of a grant of arms, for which he had applied so early as 1558-59, but of which at that time he appears to have got only the "tricking" or drawing.

The year 1598 has a special interest in the biography of our dramatist. In that year he and Ben Jonson began an acquaintance, which, in spite of some rubs, inseparable from a long intercourse between men in a

manner rivals, evidently mellowed into genial friendship. Rowe tells us, and there seem no grounds for discrediting the pleasant information, that the acquaintance of these great men began in the following manner:—"Mr. Jonson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the persons in whose hands it was put, after having turned it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natured answer that it would be of no service to their company, when Shakespeare luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the public." The play in question was "Every Man in his Humour." When originally acted, 1596, the scene was laid in Italy; Jonson afterwards gave the characters English names, and transferred the scene to London. Thus altered, it was produced at the theatre of the Blackfriars in 1598, Shakespeare being one of the actors.

An interesting memorial—the only letter extant which is known to have been received by the poet—bears the date of the year 1598, and affords additional proof, if any were required, of his being now considered a man of substance:—"Lovinge contreyman, I am bolde of yow, as of a frende, cravinge your helpe with xxx. li. upon Mr. Bushells and my securites, or Mr. Myttons with me. Mr. Roswell is nott come to London as yeate, and I have especiall cause. Yow shall frende me much in helpinge me out of all the debetts I owe in London, I thanck God, and muche quiete my mynde, which wolde nott be indebted. I am nowe towards the cowrte, in hope of answer for the dispatche of my busynes. Yow shall neither loose creddyt nor monney by me, the Lord wyllinge; and now but perswade yowrselfe soe, as I hope, and you shall nott need to fear butt with all heartie thankfulness I wyll holde my tyme, and content yowr frende; and yf we bargaine farther, you shall be the palemaster yowrselfe. My tyme biddes me hasten to an ende, and soe I comittt this [to] yowr care and hope of yowr helpe. I feare I shall nott be backe thys night from the Cowrte. Haste. The Lorde be with yow and with us all, Amen. From the Bell in Carter Lane, the 25 October, 1598. Yowrs in all kyndenes, RYC. QUYNEX. To my loveinge good frende and contreyman, Mr. Wm. Shakespere, deliver thees." It is to be regretted that this letter, the only one saved out of the many hundreds he must have written and received, affords no indication as to what part of the metropolis Shakespeare then resided in. "From a paper now before me, which formerly belonged to Edward Alleyn, the player, our poet appears to have lived in Southwark, near the Bear Garden, in 1596," says Malone; but the paper he refers to has been lost. In 1598, however, it would seem from a subsidy roll discovered by the Rev. J. Hunter, wherein Shakespeare is assessed at £5, and subjected to a rate of 13s. 4d. in the parish of St. Helens, Bishopsgate, that he was then living on the northern side of the Thames: "Affid. William Shakespere, v. li.-xiijs. lijd." Mr. Collier quotes a small slip of paper which he found at Dulwich, to prove that Shakespeare was living in Southwark in 1596; but this paper, on examination, turns out to be a modern fabrication. To the list already given from Meres of the works produced by Shakespeare, we ought certainly to add, before the end of the sixteenth century, *The Taming of the Shrew*; *King Henry IV.*, Part 2; the Three Parts of *King Henry VI.*; *King Henry V.*; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and probably the first draft of *Hamlet*; *As You Like It*; *Much Ado about Nothing*; *All's Well that Ends Well* (if this is not the play Meres calls *Love Labours Won*); and *Pericles*. At the beginning of September, 1601, the poet's father died in his seventy-first year. He left no will, or rather, none has been discovered; and, in the absence of any proof to the contrary, we may fairly infer that the prosperity which gilded his declining days was due to the affection of his eldest son. In the year succeeding his father's death, Shakespeare made a large accession to his Stratford property, by purchasing one hundred and seven acres of arable land, for which he paid a sum equivalent to about £2,000 at this day. To judge by the entries in the Accounts of the Revels, Shakespeare's dramas were in high estimation at the court of James VI. From November, 1604, to March, 1605, six of them were played before the king at Whitehall; and James, in token of his admiration of their author, is reported to have written him a letter "with his own hand."

But the licentiousness of the theatres at this time appears to have been unbounded; and what strikes us as most remarkable is the fact, that the king's players were equally culpable with the less respectable of their profession. On the 5th of April, 1606, the French ambassador wrote from London that the king's players "had brought forward their own king and all his favourites in a very strange fashion. They made him curse and swear because he had been robbed of a

bird, and beat a gentleman because he called off the hounds from the scent. They represent him as drunk at least once a day," &c. In the same letter the ambassador relates that the players, notwithstanding an express prohibition to the contrary, persisted in acting the "History of the Duke of Biron," in which they introduced the Queen of France, until the king at last "made order that no play shall be henceforth acted in London."

What influence, if any, the growing dissension between the court and the theatre may have had upon Shakespeare's retirement from the stage, is a matter of speculation. The last appearance of his name as an actor is in a printed list of the characters to Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*, which was played at the Globe in 1603, and speedily withdrawn. It is extremely probable that he retained an interest in the company long after he abandoned the profession of a player; but the evidence adduced by Mr. Collier to prove this is now known to be fictitious.

He was in the habit, Aubrey tells us, of visiting his native town once a year; and we incline to the belief that it was not long after 1605 when he carried into effect the design which during many years he had been preparing for, and settled permanently down at Stratford in the midst of his family, to combine playmaking and husbandry. We have seen that so early as 1597, he began to invest the surplus proceeds of his vocation in buying property at Stratford. In 1602, again, he added to the purchase of the "Great House," or, as he named it, "New Place," one hundred and seven acres in Old Stratford, as well as a house in the town. A year later he made a further investment by purchasing a messuage at Stratford, with barns, gardens, and orchards; and in 1605 he executed an indenture for the purchase of the unexpired term of a lease of the great and small tithes in Stratford, Old Stratford, Bishopston, and Welcome, and paid for the remainder of this lease £440—a sum equivalent to perhaps £2,500 at the present day.

In 1607 the poet had the gratification of seeing his elder daughter, Susanna, united to Dr. Hall, a physician of considerable eminence in Warwickshire. The same year, however, brought with it the death of his brother Edmund; and the following a far sadder bereavement—the death of his mother. At this period, and we apprehend for two or three years previous, our dramatist was permanently resident at Stratford.

The Diary of the Rev. John Ward, vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, from 1648 to 1679, was found a few years ago in the library of the Medical Society of London, and affords us a few scanty records of the poet in his latter years. Among other things the worthy vicar speaks of having heard that "Mr. Shakespeare" in his elder days lived at Stratford, and supplied the stage with two plays every year and had for it an allowance so large "that he spent at the rate of £1,000 a year." It is not easy to estimate with anything like precision what Shakespeare's annual income was after his retirement, but that he could afford an expenditure of £1,000 per annum is not credible. The statement that he furnished the theatre in London with two plays each year is not, however, improbable; though it is surprising that at the very period when he was supplying London with productions which were to confer immortality on him and those nearest to him, which were to render Stratford a literary Mecca, to whose shrine pilgrims from every country in the world would come to offer homage, the performance of plays in that town was rigidly forbidden. So early as 1602, the municipal powers of the borough interdicted all theatrical exhibitions under a penalty of 10s. for each infraction of their order. In 1612 "the inconvenience of plaies being verie seriously considered of," the fine was increased to £10. This intolerance of the drama at Stratford has been ascribed to the strong growth of the Puritan spirit in Warwickshire during the early part of the seventeenth century. The Rev. Joseph Hunter, who was one of the first to direct attention to this circumstance, has further shown that this Puritan spirit entered the families of Quiney and Sadler, with whom Shakespeare was allied, and that his daughter and her husband were undoubtedly influenced by it. And he remarks, "it has sometimes occurred to me, that the entire disappearance of all manuscript of Shakespeare—so entire that no writing of his remains except his name, and only one letter addressed to him—is in some way connected with the religious turn which his posterity took."

The year 1613, which we have now reached, appears to have been fertile in events to Shakespeare. At the opening of it he was deprived of his brother Richard, who died at Stratford. In March we find him in London occupied in the purchase of a house and ground in the vicinity of the Blackfriars theatre. At the same time he was involved in the anxieties and charges of a chancery suit, which arose out of the share he had bought of the tithes in 1605. The draft of the bill presented by him and the other plaintiffs is still preserved, but the result of the litigation is not



[GRAMMAR-SCHOOL AND GUILD CHAPEL AT STRATFORD-ON-AVON]

known. The summer of this year was marked by another incident which must have impressed him deeply. This was the destruction of the Globe theatre, which was burned down on the 29th of June, during the performance of his own *King Henry VIII*. Whether he was a pecuniary sufferer by this disaster has not been shown; it is thought, as he makes no mention of theatrical property in his will, that he disposed of his interest in it when he finally retired from public life.

On the number and names of the plays produced by Shakespeare, from the opening of the seventeenth century to the termination of his literary life, opinions are divided. It has been conjectured that up to 1600 he had written twenty-three or twenty-four pieces, the names of which have been given. From that period to the end it is probable that he wrote fifteen or sixteen more, and these for the most part the grandest of the series—namely, *Timon of Athens*; *Measure for Measure*; *Macbeth*; *Hamlet* (enlarged); *Troilus and Cressida*; *Twelfth Night*; *Coriolanus*; *Julius Cæsar*; *Antony and Cleopatra*; *A Winter's Tale*; *Othello*; *King Lear*; *Cymbeline*; *The Tempest*; and *Henry VIII*.

During the following year our dramatist was engaged with the corporation of Stratford in opposing a projected enclosure of some public lands, and, as we learn from the memoranda of Thomas Green, the clerk to the municipal body, again visited London. The same year appeared a poem, partly founded on his play of *Richard III.*, entitled "The Ghost of Richard the Third," which contains the last contemporaneous eulogium upon Shakespeare's genius extant. Richard is the speaker:

To him that impt my fame with Clio's quill,
Whose magicke rais'd me from Oblivion's den,
That writ my storie on the Muses' hill,
And with my actions dignified his pen;
He that from Helicon sends many a rill,
Whose nectared veins are drunke by thiratie men;
Crown'd be his stile with fame, his head with bayes,
And none detract, but gratulate his praise.

There is little more to relate. On the 10th of February, 1616, his younger daughter, Judith, was married to Thomas Quiney, a vintner at Stratford, the bride being then thirty-one years of age, and the bridegroom twenty-seven. On the 25th of the following month Shakespeare executed his will, which, from the words, "*Vicesimo quinto die Martii*," having been substituted for "*Vicesimo quinto die Januarii*," was evidently prepared two months before. He declares himself as in perfect health when the will was made, but his signatures to it evince much physical debility; and a few weeks later, on the 23rd of April, the anniversary of his birth,

He gave his honours to the world again,
His blessed part to heaven, and slept in peace.

Stratford, or Stretford, where the great poet drew his first breath and yielded up his last, is a place of considerable antiquity. It is mentioned long before the Conquest, in a charter of Egwin, Bishop of Worcester, of which see it was a manor. The bishops had once a palace there; and to this circumstance we must attribute the origin of its municipal government. They held a court-leet there twice a year, and were no doubt its benefactors as well as its feudal superiors. Subject to that see it remained until the infancy of Edward VI. encouraged the audacious nobility of England to plunder the feeble. In the third year of that royal child's pretended reign, the all-powerful and most unprincipled John Dudley, Earl of Warwick (afterwards Duke of Northumberland), compelled the then bishop, John Heath, to surrender it to him. On his attainder, it was for a while granted to his duchess; but in 1556 we find it appropriated to the Hospital of the Savoy—the best use that could be made of land which had so long been the property of the Church. But the times were unsettled. It reverted for a few years to the Crown; by Elizabeth it was granted to Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick (son of the worthless peer already mentioned), and, in the failure of heirs male, to his brother, Robert Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester, a man more infamous than even his father. Both dying without issue, it reverted to the Crown; and after two or three changes it came into the hands of Lionel, Earl of Middlesex, who transmitted it to his descendants the ducal family of Dorset.

Stratford had a college, or rather a chantry, founded in the fifth year of Edward III., by John de Stratford, Bishop of Winchester. It was served by four priests and a warden, and was endowed with lands and tenements amounting, at the dissolution, to £127 18s. 9d. per annum. This endowment eventually followed the fate of the manor. And the place had also its burgesses as early as the reign of Richard I. It was not, however, incorporated until the seventh year of Edward VI. In the charter granted by his successor, the principal inhabitants were formed into a body corporate under the name of the bailiff and burgesses of Stratford-upon-Avon. The number of aldermen was to be fourteen, from whom was to be annually elected the bailiff. As this body was required to keep the bridge and roads in repair; to maintain twenty-four decayed inhabitants in almshouses which had been hitherto maintained by a charitable fraternity, the Guild of the Holy Cross; to pay the master of the grammar-school twenty pounds a year, and the vicar of the parish the same sum; they were entrusted with

the revenues of the dissolved guild, which were about forty-six pounds per annum, and the tithes of all the lands which had belonged to the dissolved college, amounting to about thirty-four pounds annually. The whole income of the corporation, therefore, was the magnificent sum of eighty pounds—from which, when twenty pounds were deducted for the vicar, and twenty for the schoolmaster, only forty would remain for the support of the twenty-four paupers—for the institution of the almshouses, and the repairs of the bridge.

The charter recites: "That the borough of Stratford-upon-Avon was an ancient borough, in which a certain guild was theretofore founded, and endowed with divers lands, tenements, and possessions, out of the rents, revenues, and profits whereof a certain Free Grammar School for the education of boys was made and supported." The charter then recites, as above, the other public objects to which the property of the guild had been applied, states that its possessions had fallen to the king, and grants to the corporation part of them for the maintenance of an almshouse, and ordains that the "Free Grammar School, for the education of boys and youth, should be thereafter maintained and kept up as theretofore it used to be." The only qualifications necessary for the admission of a boy into the school were that he should be a resident in the town, of seven years of age, and able to read.

The Grammar School was closely connected with the Corporation of Stratford. Shakespeare's father was a member of the corporation; and there is, therefore, little room to doubt that when his son William was of the fitting age, he was sent to this school, where the best education of the time was obtainable without any expense. It has been asserted that Shakespeare knew "little Latin and less Greek;" but whether this were so or not, it may be safely assumed that he received, at least, a sound English education, and that he obtained his scholastic learning at the Free Grammar School of Stratford.

The Grammar School was, of late years, a room over the old Town Hall, both, doubtless, belonging to the ancient guild. It is evident, however, that the chapel of the guild was also used as a schoolroom. This chapel is a building of just proportions, but without much ornamentation, and very fairly represents the ecclesiastical architecture of the time of Henry VII. The interior contains little of interest, though a series of extraordinary paintings on the walls, illustrative of the history of the "holy cross," were discovered some years ago. Hither, we may fairly presume, the bard of all time came as a "tender juvenile" "unwillingly to school."

(To be continued.)



GERTRUDE'S INTRODUCTION TO COUNT DE BAYER.]

MRS. LARKALL'S BOARDING SCHOOL.

By the Author of "Man and His Idol."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SCIENCE IN THE CAUSE OF LOVE.

I pass, like night, from land to land,
I have strange power of speech. Coleridge.

THE bright sunshine of a March morning lighted a pleasant sleeping-chamber at the Towers, the residence of Sir Sydney Robart, though partially impeded by a white curtain hanging before the open latticed casement.

It was one of those bright, fresh, yet warm mornings of the early spring, which are so beautiful in their contrast with the passing winter, more beautiful than even the mornings of summer.

Through the open casement the air stole in, balmy and refreshing, waving the white curtain to and fro, like an idly flapping sail.

When, at intervals, a stronger gust than usual swept the curtain aside and let the sunshine in, it illuminated, for an instant, a sleeping face, almost identical in colour with the pillow into which it was pressed. A white face, with white eyelashes and eyebrows, and surrounded by the tangles of long silken locks, pure and lustrous as silver, yet the face of a young maiden.

The sleeper was Joanna, the reputed witch of the Black Forest.

Two days and two nights had passed, since Edward Bruce, wandering in the grounds about the Towers, had been startled by the phantom in the moonlight, and had seen Joanna fall prostrate at his feet.

During the whole of that time she had remained in the trance into which she had sunk, and which resembled sleep, with intervals of half-consciousness, during which the young girl appeared to be keenly alive to what was passing, not around her, but at distant spots, in other lands even, and which she would sometimes describe with dramatic minuteness, though more often in unconnected and incoherent sentences.

Throughout this strange trance-like sleep, she was also haunted by the memory of some event, which she described again and again, as if it was passing before her eyes at the moment.

"Quick! quick, mother!" she would cry out. "See! They are here! That is the light of their pine-torches shining on the lattice. Now they are beating at the door, and it is so old and fragile! It splits, it yields!

Adolph! Adolph! What shall I do? The water will kill me! There is ice in the Black Stream, and my blood is so thin, it will freeze in my veins. Hark! The door yields! Save me! save me! I am no witch, but a poor, unhappy, heart-broken, motherless girl. No, not motherless while you are with me, Marguerite. But they will tear us asunder. Hans has no mercy. Save me, Adolph, save me! What is this? Your cloak? Ha! a trap in the floor! The curtain,—draw it, Marguerite, draw it. 'Tis cold and dark down there; but I fear not. Ghosts cannot harm me now. Good-bye, and God bless you! What, the dark passage opens in the heart of the forest, outside the village? I am safe, then! And I have money. Why, then, I will beg my way to the sea-port, and fly to England—to Roland!"

Twenty times during the day and night Joanna would repeat these words, and seem to act over again the incidents of her escape from the village, and her departure to England in search of the man who had done her a life-wrong.

On this particular morning she had remained peculiarly quiet, having fallen into a sound natural slumber, in which it was hoped her trance would end.

Several times already Lady Agatha, whose sympathies were keenly aroused by the condition of the poor outcast, had stolen on tip-toe into the room, and perceiving that she still slept, had retreated without disturbing her. Yet she had a strong motive for doing so. Each time as she descended from the apartment she was met in the hall by the flushed face and eager eyes of Edward Bruce, to whose inquiring glance she was compelled to reply with a shake of the head. The lad seemed filled with a strange nervous impatience that morning, and Lady Agatha saw that he could scarcely endure these repeated checks.

He had risen early, and had roamed about the grounds for hours, attended by Sir Sydney's favourite spaniels, Eric and Brac, who bounded by his side, almost asking for the notice to which they were accustomed.

But Edward's mind was pre-occupied.

An idea had occurred to him over-night, which he had imparted to the family physician, who had been called in to attend Joanna, and he had quite concurred in it. The idea was simply this. While in her trance-slumber, Joanna had repeatedly mentioned the name of Roland Hershaw, or Roland, Prince Vladimir, as she called him, and though she did so with a shudder, as if the association which the name conjured up was a painful one, she appeared to be often actually in his presence, and a witness of what he did and said.

If there was this power in the woman, Edward argued, might it not be possible that it might be carried a little further, so that through this means he might ascertain the fate of the lost Amy?

That he would find her he was resolved. That he would ascertain, sooner or later, from her own lips, the secret of her heart, had become his avowed determination.

At first he would not believe it possible that a woman could be spirited away and concealed from her friends, in spite of reward and publicity, without any clue to her being obtained. Besides, he day after day looked for the appearance of Peter Wolff, in whose promise he still had a kind of faith. But, up to this time, all expedients had failed. Amy did not return. It seemed hopeless to expect that she would do so. As a last resource, it occurred to him that the strange German woman, to whom Sir Sydney had permitted him to give shelter, might throw some light upon the mystery.

The family doctor had suggested that the readiest way of carrying out this idea was to procure the attendance of a professed mesmerist, who might be able to extract from Joanna much more than she would voluntarily disclose.

Edward caught at the idea, and then the medical adviser gave him the address of an old friend of his, a man who had walked the hospitals with him years ago, and might have taken a high position in the medical world had he not been deluded into a strange line of practice, partly homoeopathic, partly mesmeric, and ended by very nearly being tried for the manslaughter of a noble lady, wife of a cabinet minister, who died under some new-fangled treatment at his hands. After that, said Edward's informant, he ceased to practise to any great extent; but devoted himself to the secret sciences, and particularly mesmerism.

The name of this person was—Doctor Amphlett.

His address was in Hyde Park.

Immediately on receiving this information the young man had ridden over to the nearest market-town, after dark on the preceding night, and had telegraphed for the doctor to arrive as early as possible. Probably Dr. Amphlett's notions of early hours were not those entertained down at the Towers. Certainly Edward Bruce had paced the lawn and rambled among the garden-paths for hours before there was any sign of his arrival. And when he at length came—not a little surprised and flurried at the summons, as all thought—he advised still further delay, stating as the result of a glance at the patient, that she was in a very serious state, and that the natural sleep she was taking was life itself to her.

While waiting, Dr. Amphlett, over a glass of wine, ascertained from Sir Sydney and Lady Agatha, much that he was glad to know, mingled with a great deal that was already far more familiar to him than the baronet or his lady suspected.

On his part the doctor kept his own counsel. He did not give the slightest hint that he had ever known Roland Hershaw, or even Amy Robert or Gertrude Norman.

Had he avowed that they had all been under his own roof, and that he had played a not insignificant part in respect to each, suspicion might have been aroused, and there might have been questions asked which it would have been awkward to answer.

Better to say nothing. Especially as Doctor Amphlett had plans and objects of his own which he did not deem it necessary to impart to a single human being, but which he nevertheless kept steadily before his eyes in all he did.

While the conversation over the wine was going on it was announced that the patient was awake. Not literally, because sleep had only yielded to the trance-state, but sufficiently aroused for the mesmerist to play his part.

The faces of the baronet and his lady were very anxious as they stood by the bed-side, waiting for what would take place. As to Edward Bruce, he threw himself into a chair at a little distance from the bed, and sat there perfectly overcome.

His fears made him dread the revelation for which he longed.

"If she should be dead?" he asked himself with a shudder.

But there was a worse alternative still.

"If she should have been decoyed away by the man who had won her heart and had made another his wife?"

In this case he resolved that he would never rest till he had made the villain wipe out the girl's dishonour with his blood.

When Dr. Amphlett approached the white-haired girl upon the bed, he proceeded to make the usual mesmeric passes with his hands, adding other actions, which appeared superfluous, if not ridiculous, but which produced very startling results.

A glow as of rosy health came into the wasted cheeks.

The eyes slowly opened, and the pupils, usually colourless, had a tinge amounting almost to a pale blue—a more decided colour than they were ever accustomed to present.

With widely-open eyes, Joanna stared full in the face of the doctor, though she appeared to see nothing with her steadfast and fixed orbs. On his pressing his thumbs to hers, he was enabled to draw her from a reclining to a sitting posture. Then he addressed her.

"What do you see?" he said.

"You," was the answer, in German.

"I am thinking of some one—who is it?"

"Ah!" cried Joanna, the flush in her face dying out, and then returning yet more vividly; "tis he."

"Who?"

"Roland—I see him!"

"Where?"

"Surely not upon land! No—'tis a ship. He is upon the water!"

"Alone?"

"No—there are many about him. Ah, what is this I see? 'Tis the same face—the face I saw before the altar. She comes to him across the deck; she takes his hand—the hand that is red. Fool—fool, she does not see that it is blood! Yet every pore is full of it!"

The agitation of the seeress at these thoughts was so great, that her face was bathed in perspiration.

As she spoke, Edward Bruce rose from his chair. He had heard enough to arouse his attention.

"This woman," he said—"is she dark or fair?"

The question was put.

"She is dark," replied Joanna; "her hair is black. She is looking up to him with large dark eyes. She presses his hands upon her breast—she cannot see that they are red with blood!"

"Does he speak to her?" asked the doctor.

"Yes; but he does not heed what he is saying. His thoughts are far away."

"Follow them."

"I cannot."

Unperceived by those around him, the doctor drew some trifling object from his waistcoat-pocket, and pressed it into the palm of the patient's hand.

"Does that help you?" he asked.

Joanna paused for a minute or two, as if thinking deeply. Then a smile of intelligence broke out over her face.

"Yes," she said. "He is thinking of a woman. I have never seen her before. She has hair like gold, but a pale, wasted face. I see her as he pictures her in his mind."

"Where is she?"

It took a long, long while to answer this question. During that interval the clairvoyant was greatly convulsed, and it required all the doctor's mesmeric strength to hold her in what appeared to be an agony of thought.

"There is a cottage," she said; "trees are round it. Yes—it is in the country. She sits at the window. A man is by her side. They are reading a letter!"

"Can you read it?"

"No—it is in English; I don't know how to read it. Ha! the man holds the envelope in his hand. The sun shines on it. Let me see?—let me see? There is a name. 'Peter,' I read that. And what is this? Ha! I have it. 'Wolf!'"

"Peter Wolf!" cried Bruce, in amazement.

"Hush!" whispered the doctor, apparently not highly delighted with the communication. Then he said with sudden eagerness: "You can read one word more, Joanna?"

"No, 'tis turned from me!"

"But through the paper. Try—it will not tax your mind!"

Joanna remained silent a brief space, and the action of the face was that of one concentrating the gaze upon some object. Then with a sudden cry of joy, she said:

"I read! He lays it upon the table, and I read. There is a word 'Chertsey,'—that is the word. It is distinct!"

"There is no more?"

"No more."

"It is enough," cried the young man; "torture her no further. Amy lives, and I have the clue that will bring me to her. Wolf, too, the scoundrel, lives, and has deceived me. He has been false to his promise made me in the prison. But I will be even with him. We shall meet; and when we meet there will be a reckoning between us!"

Sir Sydney Robert interposed.

"No," he said, "that is my task. Let us but discover the villain who has been the cause of all our misery, and nothing shall save him from my just vengeance."

"That," said the doctor, "is a question which I must leave you to determine between yourselves. In the meantime, is it necessary that I should question this stranger further?"

"Surely not," said the countess.

"There are but two questions," remarked Sir Sydney, "which I am anxious to have answered. What should have brought this strange, forlorn woman to my house? and in what way has she become mixed up in the fortunes of Roland Hershaw?"

"The two questions, I imagine, admit of one answer," replied Amphlett; "but I doubt the policy of our pursuing an inquiry which must be attended with great pain at this moment. You have obtained valuable information, on which you can at once act, and I would suggest the removal of the patient to my house in town. Here, she can only be a burden to you. But her case is curious; and so thoroughly justifies all my theories, that I shall undertake the charge of her as a labour of love."

He did not feel it necessary to add aloud what was passing in his own mind; otherwise, he would have said:

"Besides, this woman will give me a hold upon Hershaw, and upon another party, of whom it is not prudent to say anything at present. The consequence will be that I shall be able to present a much bolder front to my creditors than I do at present, and, perhaps, to bring back my legitimate position in the medical world which seemed lost for ever."

As he did not say this, and so did not "let the cat out of the bag," his idea was readily fallen in with, and Sir Sydney insisted upon bearing the expense of supporting the invalid.

This settled, Dr. Amphlett was about to take his departure, but suddenly offered his services to Edward Bruce to accompany him to Chertsey.

"I know the place well," he said, "and many of the best people. There will be little difficulty in my finding any stranger who has settled there."

Edward eagerly embraced the offer.

"You have given me new life!" he cried, enthusiastically. "Find Amy for me, and I shall owe you a debt of gratitude that nothing can repay."

"Don't mention it," replied Amphlett. "It is one of the most painful experiences I have ever known. I'm but too happy to think that my poor talents have been of any service to you. Pardon me while I write a prescription, which, I think, will be of service to our patient, and I will be at your service."

The doctor took from his pocket an oblong notebook; and, tearing from it a leaf, wrote in pencil thus:

"Fly! The Roberts are upon the scent. We are coming down in force to seize you and the girl! My house, at the usual hour.—A."

A curious prescription this, was it not?

Having begged an envelope, and thrust the scrap of paper inside it, he hastily scribbled the address, "Mr. Wolff, Aster Cottage, Chertsey;" and carefully kept it concealed while he put a postage-stamp on the corner of it.

Then the doctor and Edward Bruce drove off in the baronet's dog-cart together.

About a mile down the road there was a pillar letter-box.

On reaching it, Amphlett leaped down, with an agility surprising in one of his years, and dropped the letter into the aperture in the pillar.

At the same time, he hastily ran his eye over the table showing the hours at which the pillar was cleared.

"It will take five hours," he muttered, as he resumed his seat in the dog-cart—"five, eh?—before that's delivered. What shall we do? Does he know Chertsey? If I thought not, I'd take him to some other place, where we could inquire for Wolff for ever, and to no purpose. Perhaps the safest game, though, is a 'spill!' If I can only fracture his collar-bone, now, without breaking my own neck!"

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE AMBASSADOR'S BALL.

Take heed! Take heed! The lightest word
Thy lips can utter here, may cause to fall
The impending avalanche.

L'Chut

IGNORANT of what was thus passing at home, and threatening his welfare in a manner he had yet to learn, Roland Hershaw arrived with his bride on the other side of the water, and made direct for Paris.

It was not his intention to stay there any time. The place was too near home, and the relations between France and England a great deal too cordial to make it a safe or pleasant residence for him.

That he had settled before he left this country.

He had, indeed, chalked out his whole line of conduct long ago, and his success was mainly due to the pertinacity with which he had adhered to it. In a dark hour, and under the spell of temptation which he deemed irresistible, this man had deliberately proposed to himself the career in which he had, up to the present time, been so successful. At this moment he stood upon the pinnacle of fortune; but he was neither dazzled nor giddy. If he was destined to fall, clearly it would not be from any want of coolness, judgment, or attention to the details of self-preservation.

The visit to Paris was only a flying one. It was paid chiefly because he had money to draw from a bank there—money deposited by Protheroe deceased, and so available as part of the fortune of his heirs.

Only intending to stay in the capital of Europe twenty-four hours, he took no letters of introduction except one to the banker.

That, however, proved quite enough.

He had not presented that an hour before it was known in a dozen circles that the English people who had come into the great Indian merchant's fortune were in Paris.

That night half-a-dozen invitations to various assemblies reached their hotel.

To these no attention whatever was paid by Roland—who, by the way, adopted an *alias* directly he quitted England, and now called himself Captain Disney. He glanced over them, and cursed the impudence of the unknown entertainers. Gertrude could not understand this. Wretched in heart, broken in spirits, she pettishly demanded whether they were never going to enjoy themselves—never cease rushing from spot to spot, like hunted criminals? She had a girl's natural longing for society. Everybody she had ever heard of at Mrs. Larkall's had spent their time in Paris in a continued round of opera, ball, and party, and without those resources Paris was nothing more than Brighton.

So she grumbled on.

Roland heard her and only sneered.

He kept up very little show of affection now. The mask had been partly torn away from the moment the money came within reach of his fingers. Gertrude had begun to fear immediately on her return from Rouen, from which place she had been summoned by telegraphic message, that she had made a grievous mistake. That scene at the railway terminus, when the sudden apparition of Amy Robert threw Roland completely off his guard, had confirmed all.

She knew from that moment that she was he wife of a man who did not love her.

For that man she would have died, and he cared no more for her than for the most casual stranger.

It was a bitter, bitter truth to awaken to, after months of delicious dreaming, which seemed bounded by an infinity of mutual love. A woman more skilled in the arts of the world would have masked her feelings, and have sought to win by every artifice the affection she did not possess.

Gertrude was but a school-girl, and she acted as one.

She showed her bitter, passionate regret as vehemently as a child over a broken toy.

Thus as he sat by her side in the railway carriage, and watched her afterwards on the deck of the steamer, Roland Hershaw had said to himself:

"This woman is dangerous. She has the temper and propensities of a vicious mare. It will be necessary to use the kicking strap."

It would have been wiser had the man determined to adopt the Rarey system. A little soothing, a studied show of kindness at that stage might have made all well. True, the seeds of jealousy were deeply sown. Gertrude hated Amy Robart as we always hate those whom we injure. She had trembled at first at the thought of the dreadful calamity she had brought upon the poor girl; but after a time she had secretly congratulated herself on having thus disposed of a rival. That unfortunate meeting at the terminus had destroyed the illusion. She saw that Roland, while making her his wife, had lost none of his affection for the baronet's daughter.

How this would gall, and chafe, and exasperate a high-spirited girl you can imagine. If the first effect was temporary depression; if she felt at the moment utterly crushed and broken-hearted, that stage was sure to pass away. It was certain to be succeeded by a state of feeling, the predominant key of which would be vindictiveness.

That feeling Roland did everything to foster.

His unpardonable neglect and undisguised contempt for her wishes at this early period of their married life drove the woman to the verge of madness.

As they sat in this mood in their superb apartment at the hotel, their friend the banker was abruptly announced.

Roland started and lost his colour.

He did not like sudden announcements, particularly of people connected with business.

There was no knowing in these days of telegraphic messages and express trains what was likely to happen.

However, on this occasion there was no cause for alarm. M. Fould, the banker, entered, bowing to the ground—bowing so low, first to the heiress and then to the captain, that he presented the back of his bald head and revealed the strings of his collar at every dip.

In a few flowing phrases M. Fould explained that on that evening there was to be a ball at the British Embassy, and that, feeling sure that it would be gratifying to madame—and here he gave such a dip that his forehead nearly touched the carpet, and the buttons in the small of his coat were visible—he had secured invitations for Captain Disney and lady.

Roland Hershaw was not without his weaknesses. This ball would, he felt, be a great occasion, and though he did not intend to go into society so soon, or so near home, he would be as safe in the ambassador's drawing-room as anywhere.

So he accepted.

Gertrude was, of course, delighted. Her face was radiant with smiles. For the first time she began to believe in her new position, and to think that, after all, life might not be so unendurable with her husband as she had feared.

And when, a few hours after the invitation, she stood before the full-length cheval-glass, surveying herself in her ball-dress, just as she had been turned out of hand by a French maid in the hotel, she surveyed the reflection of her loveliness with a proud satisfaction.

"What if he does love that inanimate wax beauty?" she said, with a curl of the lip; "she's far enough away. Her image will grow more and more faint in his memory, while I shall be with him, always with him, and able to charm him with a thousand fresh devices, till he loves me as he would always have loved me but for her. Oh, how I hate her for stealing his heart from me!"

The ambassador's ball was superb.

Gertrude had never in her life entered a suite of rooms so gorgeous, yet in such exquisite taste as those in which it was given. She had no idea of a galaxy of beauty and a lavish splendour of attire such as she there beheld.

The first effect was one of unmitigated pleasure.

This was a glimpse into the paradise of high life, and it was for this that she had always languished.

"Oh, how beautiful, Roland!" she cried, clutching at his arm.

"Hush!" he exclaimed with an angry frown, "I am not Roland here. Call me Disney."

"But why? Is it not your name? What do you fear?" the girl pleaded.

"Silence, curse you!" muttered the husband, his temper carrying him beyond all bounds.

Gertrude dropped her arms, looked at him, then burst into tears.

"This from you?" she exclaimed, reproachfully.

Roland's face purpled with anger as he saw that

they were not unobserved, but that, on the contrary, more than one group was watching them intently. It was with an almost superhuman effort that he controlled himself.

"I apologize, Gertrude," he whispered.

At the same moment, M. Fould stepped up, and bowing profoundly, begged to introduce a friend of his, a Count de Bayer, who would be charmed to dance with madame.

The count was a tall, handsome fellow, with a heavy cavalry moustache, and a military manner about him as if he had spent the greater part of his life in armour. As Gertrude took his proffered arm she instinctively looked round the room, and observed with proud satisfaction, that her cavalier was more distinguished in appearance than any of the gentlemen by whom he was surrounded.

In spite of his stiffness, the count was exceedingly affable, and was complete master of the art of making himself agreeable to the ladies.

Before the first figure of the quadrille, in which they took part, was over, Gertrude was surprised to find that they were conversing together like old friends.

Had she been on her guard, she would have noticed a peculiarity in the conversation.

She would have perceived that De Bayer seldom spoke except to question, leaving her, as the only alternative, to furnish him with replies.

This was, however, done in such a delicate manner, that, although no father confessor could have extracted more under the seal of the confessional, than the count did, his victim was not conscious of being "pumped," as the expression goes.

In the course of ten minutes, Gertrude had revealed a great deal more of the brief history of her life than there was any occasion for her to have done.

At length the count made a remark in a casual way, and apparently without any other object than that of keeping up the conversation, which caused Gertrude to turn pale with agitation.

"You know so many of the English families," he said, in French, though by the way, she had not stated anything of the kind, "that I dare say you have met a gentleman who moves in the best society, I believe his name is—Hershaw."

"Yes—yes, I have met him," replied Gertrude, trembling from head to foot.

This emotion was not lost on the count.

"You know him intimately, perhaps?" he asked, fixing his eyes steadily on the face of his partner.

"No, no," she stammered, as her face flushed crimson, then became ghastly in its extreme pallor.

"Indeed! Ah, now I think of it, Roland has not lived much in England till of late. He was always of a wandering disposition, even as a boy, and has travelled half-over the world, I believe."

"I have heard something of that kind," replied Gertrude.

"You have heard so from members of his family, perhaps?" asked De Bayer.

"No, not so. Indeed I hardly remember to have met any of the family," returned Gertrude.

And as she spoke, it occurred to her how imprudently she had acted in eloping with a man who studiously kept her in ignorance of his antecedents and connections.

"We were boys together," resumed the count, "and I have never forgotten him, though of course he is so much altered by this time, that it is doubtful if I should recognize him if we met."

Gertrude thought:

"Would there be any harm in my confessing to him, that it is Roland's wife whom he is addressing?"

But she had come to live in terror of the man to whom her lot in life was united, and she hesitated. While she did so, a casual, upward glance lighted on the face of Roland as he leant against a pillar, intently regarding the count, and evidently endeavouring to catch her eye. When he did so, he slowly raised his white-gloved hand and laid a finger on his lips.

She understood.

But the action was, she distinctly perceived, understood also by the Count de Bayer.

"That gentleman—the one, I mean, leaning against the pillar—is your husband, is he not?" he asked.

"Yes," Gertrude replied with an involuntary sigh. "He scarcely looks an Englishman."

"He is only English by the accident of birth," said Gertrude, unconscious that she was doing wrong.

"Indeed!"

There was something in the tone of that "indeed!" which might have been a warning to her to go no further.

"No," she returned, "his father was an Italian, a nobleman, I think, and his mother—I believe his mother was a Russian."

With all his coolness and self-possession, the Count de Bayer betrayed an amount of surprise at this piece of information apparently greatly in excess of its importance. Gertrude was struck with this, and had

the consciousness of having unintentionally revealed that which, by his expressive action, Roland had intimated to her to keep secret.

But how?

"What have I told," she asked herself, "that is dangerous to his interests, or in any way interesting to the count?"

While she propounded this question, leaning on the shoulder of De Bayer in the gallop of the last figure in the quadrille, the music ceased, and the count, in his coldest and most studied manner, conducted the pretty young English wife to her husband.

"A thousand thanks," he said, bowing to her, "for a charming quadrille."

Then he bowed to Captain Disney *alias* Roland Hershaw, and retired.

"You were in very close conversation with that fellow," said the captain, turning fiercely upon Gertrude as she took his arm; "what was he asking?"

"Oh, such fun!" replied the girl; "he wanted to know whether I had ever met a certain gentleman of the name of Roland Hershaw."

"What?"

As he uttered the word, Roland caught at the back of a chair standing near for support, so greatly was he agitated.

Gertrude looked at him in alarm.

"You are ill?" she asked.

"No, no. I'm well enough. He asked you that, did he? And you told him —?"

"That I had."

"And you added that he was in England at this moment?"

"No; why should I have done so?"

"Why? Why? You didn't—you couldn't have been idiot enough to own that you were his wife?"

"No; I did not. I kept your secret, Ro—"

"Hush! You are sure of that?"

"Quite sure."

"You gave him no clue? Nothing that he could wind or twist into an admission?"

"Nothing."

"Well, well. What further did he ask?"

"If Hershaw was an Englishman."

"And you told him —?"

"That you were by birth; but that I believed your father was an Italian, your mother a Russian."

"Great heaven! You told him this?"

"I did. I had heard so much from Mrs. Larkall. Oh, what—what harm have I done?"

He had seized her wrist with a grip of iron, and was standing glowering down upon her face with eyes like flames.

"What harm?" he muttered, bitterly. "Fshaw! We must leave this place instantly."

And without relaxing his hold of her wrist, the bones of which seemed crushed in the brutal grasp, Roland led his wife across the ballroom with suppressed calmness towards a door which opened into a conservatory, that, in its turn, leading to the grand staircase.

As they went, he looked stealthily out of the corners of his eyes in search of the Count de Bayer; but in vain.

The count had disappeared.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE.

Our acts our angels are, or good or ill.

The fatal shadows that walk by us still. Pope.

It was rather the instinct of danger than any real grounds for apprehension that made Captain Disney, as Roland now called himself, regard with such alarm the conversation which Count de Bayer had held with Gertrude.

That instinct is easily accounted for.

His perilous situation was sure to make him nervously alive to the faintest shadow of danger crossing his path.

Though Gertrude's fortune had become his through his marriage, he could not shut his eyes to the fact that he had secured it by a series of the most daring acts of forgery and perjury ever attempted. For these the success of his schemes did not atone. He was liable at any moment to be called to account for them, and what more likely than that when the real Martin Leveson turned up, as he must have done by that time, and the truth came out, that detectives would be set to work, and personal descriptions of himself be flashed along the telegraph wires all over Europe.

This was one source of danger.

Add to this that the moment which revealed to him the face of Amy Robart at the railway terminus, London Bridge, also showed him another face peeping over her shoulder, which, unless his fears deceived him, was that of the man he believed dead and mouldering in his grave—the man who was called Peter Wolff.

If Peter lived he was the heir and Gertrude had wrongful possession of the property?

That was the second source of danger.

There was yet a third.

Never, for a moment, day or night, did this man forget that snowy midnight, when the veiled woman came to him in South Audley Street, and proffered secret for secret.

The adventure was one not easily to be lost sight of; and, besides, he carried in his bosom, carefully concealed, the paper which had been handed to him by his strange visitant. And, in any moment of joy or triumph, a single crackle of that paper was sufficient to sink his spirits to the zero of melancholy. The smile upon his lips would melt away—the half-uttered jest would die into inanity, if, by the slightest movement on his part, this fatal document asserted itself.

From that paper, he learned that he was a denounced man—denounced to a Secret Society which had its members in every city of the known world, and which adopted, as its motto, the impious assertion that it was established to facilitate the vengeance of heaven upon the wrong-doer, to the third and fourth generation.

In this, the danger of Roland's position assumed its third form.

No wonder, then, that he was ever on the alert—ever wary and suspicious, and ready to attach the greatest importance to apparent trifles.

"Who is this Count de Bayer? Why should he inquire after me so anxiously?" he kept asking himself, as they rode home in the carriage to the hotel, which was situated in the avenue of the Champs Elysées.

It was singular.

Under the circumstances, it was suspicious, seeing that he felt quite certain that, in spite of the count's assertion, they had never met before in their lives.

Had Roland, instead of leaving the ambassador's by way of the conservatory, turned to the left, and stolen through the card-room, unperceived, he might have satisfied himself that his suspicions were not unfounded.

Against the marble mantel-piece in that room, Count de Bayer leant, engaged in earnest conversation with a short, elderly man, with venerable white hair, and a face yellow and shining like old parchment. Not a nice face—not one at all in keeping with the venerable hair; but, on the contrary, a wily, cunning, insidious countenance, indicative of a man who was bilious and vicious—the unwholesome state of his body, probably, having given the jaundiced and vicious tone to his mind.

It was the count who began the conversation.

"Lenco," he whispered, "you were at the Chapter of the Society last night?"

"Yes, yes, yes," replied the other, speaking very rapidly and smacking his thick flabby lips, which appeared to conceal toothless gums only.

"You heard the information against Vladimir—"

"Yes."

"Son of Estrid the Infamous—"

"Right."

"Better known under one of a dozen aliases—his last, that of Roland Hershaw?"

"I heard all about it," mumbled Lenco. "The Chapter confirmed the sentence on the father, long since dead, upon the son in consideration of Estrid's brutal infamy, and the information it has of his son's unholy life."

"It did."

"But he is in England—"

"No. He is here!"

Lenco opened his yellow eyes, which did not appear to be protected either by eyebrows or eyelashes, to their fullest extent.

"Here?" he demanded.

"Here. I have just danced with his wife."

"Surely you are mistaken," was the answer of the fleshy lips, "the memorial spoke of the offender as being in England, and gave no intimation of his being here. Was the lady introduced to you by name?"

"Not by his name; but as the wife of Captain Disney."

"And she confessed to you—"

"No. She confessed nothing decidedly; but her denials were more eloquent than assertions, and her blushes and shudders were yet more expressive. She did not to the last suspect my suspicions; but he did. I had my eye upon him, and saw that."

"These are very slight things to go upon," stammered Lenco reflectively, "and it would be an awkward thing to proceed against the wrong man."

The count dropped his elbow and squaring his shoulders, said:

"Every minute point confirmed my suspicion. Why, if her name is Disney, does the lady wear a bracelet with the letters R. G. H. in a monogram upon it? Isn't it more likely that those letters stand for Roland and something Hershaw? Besides look at that!"

He drew from his breast pocket a filmy square of lace, with rounded corners, and threw it towards Lenco.

"What are the initials on that handkerchief?"

"I see, I see, G. H.," mumbled the thick lips.

"Exactly, and yet that belongs to Mrs. Captain Disney. 'Tis a sure thing, Lenco. And now, since your office has been a sinecure long enough, I must trouble you to get on duty again. This man must be watched."

"It is for you to command; for me to obey," said Lenco, bowing with an air of deference to the count, who was evidently his superior officer.

"To your duty, then."

With this they parted. The count strolled back into the drawing-room and approached the sofa occupied by the ambassador's lady, with whom he was soon engaged in conversation. But, absorbing as it was, his eyes were ever following the movements of Lenco among the company, Lenco who sought in vain for the captain and his lady. After a while he contrived also to give a signal to the spy, who thereupon vanished.

Meanwhile, Roland and Gertrude had reached the hotel, and the latter had received instructions to pack her jewel-case, herself, without troubling the maid whose services they had secured, while Roland went in search of M. Fould the banker, who had not himself attended the ball.

He found that gentleman in his bureau, as he called the room in his house which he devoted to business purposes, and very much astonished the banker was when he saw the young man, with his eyes wild, his hair purposely disarranged, and his dress-shirt front tumbled and stained with wine.

In a few hasty, incoherent words, like those of a man excited almost beyond endurance, he explained that he had played for some hours at cards at the ambassador's—had played heavily and bet recklessly, and he entreated M. Fould to favour him with all the ready money, notes and gold he might have in the house and his own cheque for a considerable surplus, urging that the amount which stood in his wife's name in the bank would be the banker's security.

The part was so well acted that the unsuspicious banker did as he was requested, and the adventurer had the satisfaction of retreating with some five thousand pounds in an immediately available form, and with an understanding that the balance should be paid to his order through a banking firm which he had named at Frankfurt.

"It's unfortunate," he reflected, as he left the banker's house, "that I couldn't stay till to-morrow, and so carry off with me the whole sum before any exposure is possible. But this *rust* secures me something. Now, to make for the hotel."

There was a cab-rank in the street at the side of the banker's house, but at that late hour there was only a solitary cab on it.

Raising his finger to the driver, who was seated on the box, he made a dash at the door, turned the handle and bounded in.

To his astonishment the vehicle was already occupied.

"I beg pardon," he said, in French, about to retreat as rapidly as he entered. "I was not aware that the cab was engaged. And—"

"And you are in a hurry?" asked the occupant, a bilious looking gentleman with white hair, yellow eyes, flabby lips, and no teeth. "If you are going my way, you are welcome to share the seat with me."

"Thank you," said Roland, suspecting nothing. "You go towards—"

"The Champs Elysées."

"Then I am fortunate," and he took his seat.

All the while this was enacting, Gertrude Hershaw sat at the hotel in her ball-dress, in the great, gaudily furnished, but comfortless drawing-room they had engaged, waiting for her husband's coming.

The room was panelled in looking-glass, and thus, as she sat, there was on every side of her a reflection of her graceful beauty, heightened by all the artifices of the toilet and of dress.

She looked, she well knew, magnificent; but the expression on her face was far removed from one of happiness.

In truth, she was both uneasy and dejected.

"Why doesn't he love me?" she burst out, speaking unconsciously aloud. "Oh, why doesn't he love me? If he would only take me to his heart as he pretended to do, and tell me all his indifference was assumed, I would forgive him everything. I don't care for the money. If what he wanted was my fortune, he is welcome to it, every penny of it; but he might love me. Oh, why, why doesn't he love me?"

The tears stood full in her eyes as she spoke in passionate earnestness; and seeking in vain for the stolen handkerchief, she wiped them away with her glove, turning from the mirror before her as she did so, as if ashamed of the signs of weakness thus betrayed.

"Other girls would have done as I did," she said, looking up proudly. "Any girl at the school would have done it. Lolly would have given her ears for

such a chance; so would Dora, and as for Rosa Merry, she told me, told me herself, that she could eat him! It didn't seem so very wrong to listen to him, and to be persuaded to run away. How was I to know that his words were lies, and his promises all meant to deceive me? There was nobody to warn me, or to say a word of caution to me, and Mrs. Larkall herself was as blind as any of them. And now they all blame me, and would sneer at me if they knew how it has turned out, and I'm left to nothing but suspicion and misery. If he would love me I wouldn't care—I'd brave it out and bear everything that may happen; but—but—"

Again she subsided into tears, and her rebellious heart seemed crushed by the sense of overwhelming wretchedness.

Presently, as time went on and Roland did not return, all the other feelings yielded to a sudden dread lest he had deserted her.

Adventurers, she had heard, had played such tricks.

They had secured the fortunes of confiding girls, and left them penniless in foreign parts, thrown on the mercy of strangers.

Why should not Roland have done this?

She knew nothing of him. His family, of which he sometimes talked before marriage, seemed to have no existence. His property, so far as she could understand, came from no avowed source. The wealth with which he had dazzled all eyes might be the product of forging, coining, gaming, thieving—anything. He was not even clearly the possessor of his own name, but took refuge under any one that suggested itself, as if that was the natural thing for an honest, respectable man to do.

In the midst of these reflections the miserable beauty was disturbed by the abrupt entrance of one of the servants in attendance.

Advancing with the cringing servility of all foreign domestics, he presented an envelope containing, as the printed outside plainly indicated, a telegraphic message.

It was addressed to Captain Disney, the name that had last taken Roland's fancy, and was from England.

While the servant remained in the room, Gertrude had the presence of mind to treat the missive with indifference. She simply glanced at the direction, then threw the envelope carelessly upon a side-table. But directly she was alone she snatched it up, and rising from her seat in the intensity of the moment, placed her finger and thumb under the loose sides of the envelope.

Then she hesitated.

"Why should I not?" she demanded aloud. "He does not make me his confidant—he treats me as if I were his slave. I will find out something of the mysteries that surround him."

With fierce impetuosity she tore the paper open, and drew out the tissue upon which the message was written.

It was in these words:

"I have succeeded at last. She is found. Improved in mind and body. Your instructions by early post. You did not leave the cheque for the thousand, as promised, before leaving England. Enclose it—A."

"So," cried Gertrude, stern and rigid, and drawn up to her full height; "he still insults me with his passion for that—that woman! What if I had killed her—if she were dead? Perhaps then—then he would love me?"

She stood with puckered brow and eyes full of dangerous light, thinking how that might be.

Then at the sound of an approaching footstep, she angrily crumpled up the crisp paper, and thrust it into her bosom.

(To be continued.)

ON THE CHANGE OF COLOUR IN THE WEASEL AND THE STOAT.—That both these animals become perfectly white in winter with us I can now satisfactorily prove, for during this last December I killed a specimen of each at Gardsjö perfectly white, all but the tail tip in the stoat. With respect to the change from the red-brown coat of summer to the pure white winter dress, "This," observes Professor Bell, "is effected, as I believe, not by the loss of the summer coat and a substitution of a new one for the winter, but by the actual change of colour in the existing fur." Through the kindness of my friend Professor Harden, of Calstead (to whom I am indebted for many valuable hints on the fauna of this country), I have lately had the opportunity of seeing a stuffed specimen of a dead weasel which died in confinement in its pure white winter dress. Mr. Harden took it in the spring when young and put it into a cage, where it soon became very tame. He kept it through the summer, and a most interesting little pet it was. Early in autumn some small white spots appeared on

the body before the full change took place. Whether or not these came from a change in colour is not certain, but the full change of the red colour to pure white (which took place very quickly) was effected by an actual shedding of the red summer dress; and during the time that the moult (if we may so call it) was going on, the bottom of the cage was covered with hair, which flew about the room, and was quite a nuisance. My friend had no opportunity of seeing how the spring change took place, for the little weasel during the winter shared the fate of all pets, much to the regret of its owner, for it crept into an open drawer one day and was jammed to death. Whether confinement had anything to do with the process of change I cannot say, but I fancy not.—*An Old Bushman (Sweden).*

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c. &c.

CHAPTER CX.

A BITTER NIGHT.

St. Agnes Eve—ah, bitter chill it was!

The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;

The hare limped trembling thro' the frozen grass;

And silent was the flock in woolly fold! *Keats.*

A FREEZING night! Faustina shivered as with an ague-fit, and her teeth chattered like a pair of castanets, as she crouched down in one corner of the back seat and huddled all her wrappings close about her. But the cold still seemed to penetrate through all her furs, and velvets, and woollens, and enter the very marrow of her bones.

Beside her sat the viscount, silent, grim and still as though he were congealed to ice; before her sat the two policemen, well wrapped up in their heavy great coats.

All were silent except Faustina. She shivered and moaned and chattered incessantly.

Such a mere animal was this wretched woman that she was quite absorbed in her present sufferings. While enduring this intense cold, she could not look forward to the torments of the future.

"Scélérat!" she exclaimed, fiercely stamping her feet, "can you not make this beast of a carriage closer then? My flesh is stone and my blood is ice, I tell you!"

One window had been left open a little way, to let a breath of air into the carriage, which, crowded with four persons, was otherwise stifling.

But the viscount now raised both his fettered hands and closed the window.

The arrangement did not prove satisfactory. It deprived the sufferers of air without making them any warmer. Faustina shivered and moaned and chattered all the same.

"Bah!" she exclaimed, in furious disgust; "open the window again! I am suffocated—I am poisoned! They have all been eating garlic and drinking whisky!"

The window was opened at her desire; but as they were then crossing the narrow isthmus of rock that connected the castle steep with the land, the wind, from that exposed position, was cutting sharp, and drove into the aperture the stinging snow, which entered the skin like needles' points.

"Ah, shut it! shut it! it kills me! It is *infâme* to treat a poor little lady so!" she cried, bursting into tears.

Again the window was closed; but not for any length of time. Apparently she could neither bear it open nor shut. So shivering, moaning, chattering and complaining, the poor creature was taken through that long and bitter night-journey which ended at last only at the station-house at Banff.

Half-dead with cold, she was lifted out of the carriage by the two policemen and stood upon the sidewalk, where she remained, shivering, chattering and weeping tears that froze upon her cheeks as they fell.

She could see nothing in that dark street but the gloomy building before her, dimly lighted by its iron lamp over the doorway.

There she remained until the viscount was handed out.

"Cuthbert," said his lordship to the old man, who had exposed himself to the severe weather of this night and driven the carriage for the sake of being near his master as long as possible—"Cuthbert, take the carriage around to the 'Highlander' and put up there for the night. We shall want it to take us back to the castle to-morrow, after this ridiculous farce is over."

"Verra weel, me laird," replied Old Cuthbert, touching his hat with all the more deference because his master was suffering degradation.

"Ah! is it so? Will we really get back to the

castle to-morrow?" whimpered Faustina, shivering, chattering and wringing her hands.

"Of course we will," replied his lordship.

"Ah, but how shall I get through the night? I must have a good fire and a comfortable bed, and something warm to drink. Will you see to it, Malcolm?" she whimperingly inquired.

"Don't be a fool!" was the gentlemanly reply; for the viscount burned with a half-suppressed rage against the woman whose fatal beauty had led him into all this disgrace.

She burst into a passion of tears.

"That is the reward I get for all my love!" she exclaimed.

"Faustina! for your own sake, if not for any other's, exercise some discretion!" exclaimed the viscount angrily.

"Scélérat!" she screamed, in fury, "I had no discretion when I listened to you!"

"I wish to heaven you had had then! I should not have been in this mess!" he replied.

"Ah!" she hissed. "If my hands were not fettered I would tear your eyes!"

"Sweet angel!" sneered the viscount, in mockery.

"Thatche!" she hissed, "let me at him!"

The viscount laughed a hard-bitter, scornful laugh.

And so they went on, criminating and recriminating, until the empty carriage was driven away, and the policemen took them by the shoulders and pushed them into the station-house.

They found themselves in a large stone hall, with iron-grated windows. It was partially warmed with a large rusty stove, around which many men of the roughest cast were gathered, smoking, talking, and laughing.

The walls were furnished with rude benches, upon which some men sat—some reclining, and some lay at full length.

The stone floor was wet with the slop of the snow that had been brought in by so many feet, and had melted. In one of these slops lay a woman, dead drunk.

"Ah! *Grand Dieu!* I cannot stay here!" cried Faustina, gathering up her skirts, as well as she could, with her fettered hands, and looking round in strong disgust.

The viscount laughed in derision; he was angry, desperate, and he rejoiced in her discomfiture.

"Eh, Saunders! take these two women into the women's room!" said McKae, beckoning a tall, broad-shouldered, red-headed Scot to his assistance.

"Hech! it will take twa o' the strongest men here to lift yon lassie," replied the man, lumbering slowly along towards the prostrate woman and trying to raise her. If he failed in lifting her, he succeeded in waking her, and he was saluted for his pains with a volley of curses, to which he replied with a shake or two.

"*Quel horreur!* I will not stay here!" cried Faustina, stamping with rage.

"Attend t' her, Christie. Dunlap, help Saunders to remove that woman," said McKae.

Two of the policemen succeeded in raising the fallen woman, and leading her between them into an adjoining room. The man addressed as "Christie" would have taken Faustina by the arm, and led her after them, but that she fiercely shook herself from his grasp.

"Follow then an ye like, lass; but gae some gait ye maun, ye ken," said the man, good-naturedly.

She glanced around the dreary room, upon the grated windows, the sloppy floor, the rusty stove, and the wretched men, and finally seemed to think that she could not do better than to leave such a repulsive scene.

"Go along, then, and I will follow, only keep your vile hands off me!" said Faustina, gathering up her dainty raiment, and stepping carefully after her leader. As she did so, she turned a last look upon Lord Vincent. The viscount had thrown himself upon a corner of one of the benches, where he sat, with his fettered hands folded together, and his head bent down upon his breast, as if he were in deep despair.

"*Imbecil!*" was the complimentary good-night, thrown by his angel, as she passed out of the hall into the adjoining room. This—the women's room—was in all respects similar to the men's hall, being furnished with the like grated windows, rusty iron stove, and rude benches. Along on these benches, or on the floor, were scattered wretched women, in every attitude of self-abandonment; some in the stupor of intoxication; some in the depths of sorrow; some in stony despair; some in reckless defiance.

The men who had come in with the drunken woman, despoised her on one of the benches, from which she quickly rolled to the floor, where she lay dead to all that was passing around her.

Her misfortune was greeted with a shout of laughter from the reckless denizens of this room; but that shout was turned into a deafening yell when their eyes fell upon Faustina's array.

"Eh, sirs! wha the deil hae we here fra the ball?" they cried, gathering around her with curiosity.

"Off, you wretches!" screamed Faustina, stamping at them.

"Hech! but she hae a temper o' her ain, the quean," said one.

"Ou, aye, just! It will be for sticking her lad under the ribs she is here," surmised another.

"Eh, sirs! how are the mighty fa'en?" exclaimed a third, as they closed around her, and began to examine her rich dress.

"*Canaille!* how dare you?" screamed Faustina, fiercely twitching herself away from them.

"Eh! the braw furs and silks! the town doensna often see the loike o' them," said the first speaker, lifting up the corner of the rich sable cloak.

"*Scélérat!* let alone!" shrieked Faustina, stamping frantically.

The uproar brought policeman Christie to the scene.

"Take me away from this place directly, you beast! How dare you bring me among such wretches?" screamed the poor creature.

"My lass, I hae na commission to remove you. I dinna ken what ye hae done to bring yourself here; ye maun bide till the morn," said Christie, kindly and composedly.

"I will not, I say! What have I done to be placed among these vile wretches?" she persisted stamping.

"I dinna ken, lassie, as I telled ye before; but joodging by your manners, I suld say ye hae guided yourself an unco' ill gate. But howe'er that will be, here ye maun bide till the morn. And gin ye will heed guid counsel, ye'll hand your tongue," said Christie, at the same time good-naturedly setting down the hamper that contained Faustina's luxuries. She did not want it. She threw herself down upon one of the benches, and burst into a passion of tears.

The women gathered around the hamper, and quickly tore off the lid, and made themselves acquainted with its contents.

But Faustina did not mind. She was too deeply distressed to care what they did. The contents of the hamper were now of no use to her. The "good fire, the comfortable bed, and the warm beverage," that she had vehemently demanded, were unattainable, she knew, and she cared for nothing else now.

While Faustina, regardless that her famished fellow-prisoners were devouring her cakes, fruits and wine, gave herself up to passionate lamentations, another scene was going on in the men's hall.

Lord Vincent sat biting his nails and "glowering" upon the floor in his corner. From time to time the door opened, letting in a gust of wind, sleet and snow, and a new party of prisoners; but the viscount never lifted his eyes to observe them.

At length, however, he looked up and and beckoned Constable McKae to his side.

"Here, you, fellow! I would like to see your warrant again. I wish to know who is my accuser."

"Judge Randolph Merlin, my lord," answered McKae, once more taking out his warrant and submitting it to the inspection of his prisoner.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the viscount, affectedly. "Randolph Merlin! He has come to this country, I suppose, to look after his daughter, and finding that these servants are among the missing, has pretended to get up this charge against me! It will not answer his purpose, however. And I only wonder that any magistrate in his senses should have issued a warrant for the apprehension of a nobleman upon his unsupported charge!"

"Pray excuse me, my lord, but the charge was not unsupported," said McKae, respectfully.

"How, not unsupported?"

"No, my lord. The judge had for witnesses the three servants, and—"

"The three servants!" exclaimed the viscount, recoiling in amazement; but quickly recovering his presence of mind, he added, "Oh! aye—of course. They ran off with my plate, and I suppose they have succeeded in effectually secreting it and eluding discovery. And now I suspect they have been looked up by their old master, and persuaded to appear as false witnesses against me. Ha—ha—ha! what a weak device. I am amazed that any magistrate should have ventured upon such testimony to have issued a warrant for my apprehension!"

"I beg your pardon, my lord; but theirs was not the only testimony. There were several gentlemen present, fellow-voyagers of Judge Merlin, who testified to the finding of the servants in Cuba; their testimony corroborates that of the servants," said McKae.

Lord Vincent turned pale as death.

"What does that mean? Oh, I see! it is all a conspiracy," he said, with an ineffectual effort at derision.

But at that moment there was a bustle outside; the door was thrown open, and another prisoner was brought in by two policemen.

"What is the matter? Who is it now?" inquired McKae, going forward.

"We have got him, sir!" said a constable.

"Who?" demanded McRae.

"The murderer, sir!" answered the policeman, at the same moment dragging into view the assassin of Ailsie Dunbar, the ex-valet of Lord Vincent, Allick Frisbie.

Heavily fettered, his knees knocking together, pale and trembling, the wretch stood in the middle of the floor.

"Where did you take him?" inquired McRae.

"At the 'Bagpipes,' Peterhead!" replied the successful captor.

"Pray, upon what charge is he arrested?" inquired the viscount, in a shaking voice, that he in vain tried to make steady.

"A trifle of murder, among other fancy performances," said McRae.

At this moment, Frisbie caught sight of his master, and set up a howl, through which his words were barely audible:

"Oh, my lord! you will never betray me; you will never be a witness against me; you will never hang me! You promised that you would not!"

"Hold your tongue, you abominable fool! What the fiend are you talking about? Do you forget yourself, sir!" roared the viscount, furious at the fatal folly of his weak accomplice.

"Oh, no, my lord! I do not forget myself. I do not forget anything. I beg your lordship's pardon for speaking, and I will swear to be as silent as the grave, if your lordship will only promise not to—"

"Will you stop short where you are and not open your mouth again, you insufferable idiot!" thundered the viscount.

Frisbie gulped his last words, whined and crouched like a whipped hound, and subsided into silence.

And soon after this, McRae and the other officers who were off duty for the remainder of the night, went home, and the doors were closed.

A miserable night it was to all within the station-house, and especially to that guilty man and woman who had been torn from their luxurious home and confined in this dreary prison.

All that could revolt, disgust and utterly depress human nature seemed gathered within its walls. Here was drunkenness, deadly sickness, and reckless and shameless profanity, all of the most loathsome character.

And all this was excruciating torture to a man like Lord Vincent, who, if he was not refined, was at least excessively fastidious.

There was no rest; every few minutes the door was opened to receive some new prisoner, some inebriate, or some night-brawler picked up by the watch and brought in, and then would ensue another scene of confusion.

An endless night it seemed; yet it came to an end at last.

The morning slowly dawned. The pale, cold, grey light of the winter day looked sadly through the falling snow, into the closely-grated, dusty windows. And upon what a scene it looked!

Men were there, scattered over the floor and upon the benches in every stage of intoxication, some stupid, some reckless, some despairing, some sound asleep, waking up and yawning, and some walking about impatiently.

As the day broadened and the hour arrived for the sitting of the police magistrate, the policemen came in and marched off the crowd of culprits to a hall in another part of the building, where they were to be examined. Even the women were marched out from the inner room after the men.

It seemed that all the lighter offenders were to be disposed of first.

Lord Vincent and Frisbie were left alone in charge of one officer.

"When are we to be examined?" demanded the viscount haughtily of this man.

"I dinna ken," he answered, composedly lighting his pipe and smoking away.

Lord Vincent paced up and down the wet and dirty stone floor, until at length the door opened and McRae, the officer who had arrested him, entered.

"Ah, you have come at last. I wish to be informed why you have been left here all this time? Every one else has been removed," exclaimed the viscount.

"My lord, those poor creatures who were brought here during the night were not arrested for any grave offence. Some were brought in only to keep them from perishing in the snow-storm, and others for drunkenness or disorder. The sitting police magistrate disposes of them. They will mostly be discharged. But you, my lord, are here upon a heavy charge, and you are to go before Sir Alexander McKetchum."

"Why, then, do you not conduct me there? Do you mean to keep me in this beastly place all day?"

"My lord, your examination is fixed for ten o'clock; it is only nine, now," said McRae, passing on to the

inner room, from which he presently appeared with Faustina.

Wretched did the poor creature look, with her pale and tear-stained face, her reddened eyes and dishevelled hair; and her rich and delicate white evening dress with its ample skirts and lace flounces, be-draggled and be-dabbled with all the filth of the station-house.

"I have had a horrid night! I have been in worse than purgatory! I have not closed my eyes! I wish I was dead! See what you have brought me to, Malcolm! And, only look at my dress!" sobbed the woman.

"Your dress! That is just exactly what I am looking at. A pretty dress that to be seen in. What the demon do you think people will take you for?" sneered his lordship.

"I do not know! I do not care! poor trampled lily that I am!"

"Poor trampled fool! why didn't you change that Merry Andrew costume for something plainer and decenter before you left the castle?"

"Why didn't you tell me to do it, then? I never thought of it. Besides, I didn't know what this beast of a station-house was like. No carpets, no beds, no servants. And I dying for want of them all. And now I must have my breakfast. Why don't you order it, Malcolm?" she whimpered.

"I am afraid they do not provide breakfasts any more than they do other luxuries for the guests of this establishment," replied the viscount, with a malignant laugh.

"But I shall starve, then," said the poor little animal, bursting into tears.

"I cannot help it," replied the viscount, very much in the same tone as if he had said—"I do not care."

But here McRae spoke:

"My lord, there is nearly an hour left before we shall go before the magistrate. If you wish, therefore, you can send out to some hotel and order your breakfast to be brought to you here."

"Thank you; I will avail myself of your suggestion. Whom can I send?" inquired the viscount.

"Christie, you can go for his lordship," said McRae to his subordinate, who had just entered the hall.

Christie came forward to take the order.

"What will you have?" inquired Lord Vincent, curiously addressing his "sweet angel."

"Oh, some strong coffee with cream, hot rolls with fresh butter, and broiled moor-hen with currant jelly," replied Faustina.

Lord Vincent wrote his order down with a pencil on a leaf of his tablets, tore it out and gave it to Christie, saying:

"Take this to the 'Highlander' and tell them to send the breakfast immediately. Also inquire for my servant, Cuthbert Allan, who is stopping there, and order him to put my horses to the carriage and bring them around here for my use."

The man bowed civilly and went out to do his errand.

In about half-an-hour he returned, accompanied by a waiter from the "Highlander," bringing the breakfast piled up on a large tray and covered with a folded tablecloth.

He set down the tray, unfolded the cloth and spread it upon one of the benches and arranged the breakfast upon it.

"Did you see my servant?" inquired Lord Vincent of his messenger.

"Yes, me laird, and g'e him your order. The carriage will be round," replied the man.

As the viscount and his companion drew their bench up to the other bench upon which their morning meal was laid, Mr. Frisbie, who had been sitting in a remote corner of the hall with his head buried on his knees, got up and humbly stood before them, as if silently offering his services to wait at table.

"He here?" exclaimed Faustina, in amazement.

"Yes, he is in the same boat with us. Go sit down, Frisbie! we don't need you," said Lord Vincent. And the ex-valet retired and crouched in his corner like a repulsed dog.

Trouble did not take away the appetite of Mrs. Dugald. It does not ever have that effect upon constitutions in which the animal nature largely preponderates. She ate, drank, and wept, and so got through a very hearty repast. Lord Vincent, having swallowed a single cup of coffee, which constituted the whole of his breakfast, sat and watched her performances with unconcealed scorn.

Before Faustina got through, officer McRae began impatiently to consult his large silver watch.

"It is time to go," he said at length.

But Faustina continued to pick the bones of the moor-hen, between her trickling tears.

"We must not keep the magistrate waiting," said McRae.

But Faustina continued to pick and cry.

"I am sorry to hurry you, madam; but we must go," said McRae, decisively.

"Ah, bah! what a beastly place, where a poor little lady is not permitted to eat her breakfast in peace!" she exclaimed, throwing down the delicate bone at which she had been nibbling and fiercely starting up.

As she had not removed her bonnet and cloak during the whole night, she was quite ready.

As they were going out, Lord Vincent pointed to Frisbie and inquired:

"Is not that fellow to go?"

"No; he is in upon a heavier charge, you know, my lord. Your examination precedes his," said McRae, as he conducted his prisoners into the street, leaving Mr. Frisbie to solace himself with the remnants of Faustina's breakfast, guarded by Christie.

The viscount's carriage was drawn up before the door.

"Is it hame, me laird?" inquired old Cuthbert, touching his hat, from the coachman's box.

"No! You are to take your directions from this person," replied his lordship, sullenly, as he hurried into the carriage to conceal himself and his fettered wrists from the passers-by.

McRae put Mrs. Dugald into the carriage, and then jumped up and seated himself on the box beside the coachman, and directed him where to drive.

The snow was still falling fast, and the streets were nearly blocked up.

CHAPTER CXI

FRUITS OF CRIME.

Ay, think upon the cause—

Forget it not!—when you lie down to rest,

Let it be black among your dreams; and when

The morn returns, so let it stand between

The sun and you, as an ill-omened cloud,

Upon a summer's day of festival.

Byron.

AFTER a drive of about twenty minutes through the narrow streets, the carriage stopped before the town-hall.

McRae jumped down from the box and assisted his prisoners to alight.

"Will I wait, me laird?" inquired old Cuthbert, in a desponding tone.

"Certainly, you old blockhead," was the courteous reply of the viscount, as he followed his conductor into the building.

McRae, who had Mrs. Dugald on his arm, led the way through a broad, stone passage, blocked up with the usual motley crowd of such a place, into an ante-room, half-filled with prisoners, guarded by policemen, and waiting their turn for examination, and thence into an inner room, where, in a railed-off compartment at the upper end, and behind a long table, sat the magistrate, Sir Alexander McKetchum, and his clerk, attended by several law-officers.

"Here are the prisoners, your worship," said McRae, advancing with his charge to the front of the table.

Sir Alexander looked up. He was a tall, raw-boned, sinewy old Gael, with high features, a lively, red face, blue eyes, white hair and whiskers, and an accent as broad as Cuthbert's own. He was apparently a man of the people.

"Malcolm, lad, I am verrie sorry to see your father's son here on such a charge," he said.

"I am here by your warrant, sir. It is altogether a very extraordinary proceeding," said the viscount, haughtily.

"Not more extraordinary than painful, lad," said the magistrate.

"Who are my accusers, sir?" demanded the viscount, as if he was in ignorance of them.

"Ye sall sune see, me laird. Johnstone, have the witnesses in this case arrived?" he inquired, turning to one of his officers.

"Yes, your worship."

"Then bring them in."

Johnstone departed on his errand; and the magistrate turned his eyes on the prisoners before him.

"Eh, it's a bonny lassie to be here on such a charge," he muttered to himself, as he looked at Faustina, standing trembling and weeping before him.

Then beckoning the officer who had the prisoners in charge:

"McRae, mon, accommodate the lady with a chair. Why did ye put fetters on her? Surely there was no need of them?"

"There was need, your worship. The lady resisted the warrant, and fought like a Boss o' Bedlam," said McRae, as he set a chair for Faustina.

"Puir bairn! puir, ill-guided bairn!" muttered the old man between his teeth. But before he could utter another word, Johnstone re-entered the room, ushering in Judge Merlin, Ishmael Worth, and the three servants.

"Grand ciel!" exclaimed Faustina, in horror, as her eyes met those of Katy—"It is the ghost of the woman raised from the dead! No, it is herself! There are no such things as ghosts! It is herself, and I have been deceived!" muttered Faustina to herself. And then she fell into silence.

Perhaps Lord Vincent had not altogether credited McRae's statement, made to him at the station-house, for certainly his eyes opened with consternation on seeing this party enter the room.

Johnstone marshalled them to their appointed places on the right hand of the magistrate.

On turning around Ishmael met full the eyes of the viscount. Ishmael gravely bowed and averted his head. He could not be otherwise than courteous under any circumstances; and he could not bear to look upon a fellow-man in his degradation, no matter how well that degradation was deserved.

Judge Merlin also bowed, as he looked upon his worthless son-in-law; but the judge's bow was full of irony as his face was full of scorn.

The magistrate looked up from the document he was reading, and acknowledged the presence of the new arrivals with a bow. Then turning to the prisoner, he said:

"Malcolm, lad! this is an unco ill-looking accusation they has brought against you. Kidnapping, no less—a sort of piracy, ye ken, lad! What has ye to say till it?"

"What have I to say to it, sir? Why simply that it has taken me so by surprise that I can find nothing to say, but that I am astounded at the effrontery of any man who could bring such a charge against me, and at the fatuity, if you will excuse my terming it so, of any magistrate who could issue a warrant against me upon such a charge!" said the viscount, haughtily.

"Nay, nay, lad—nay, nay! I had guid grounds for what I did, as ye shall hear presently; and noo, gin ye has na objection, we will proceed wi' the investigation."

"But I have an objection, sir! I tell you this has taken me utterly by surprise! I am totally unprepared for it! I must have time, I must have counsel!" said the viscount, with much heat.

"Then I maun remand ye for another examination," replied Sir Alexander McKetchum, coolly.

"But I object to that, also! I object to being kept in confinement while there is nothing proved against me, and I demand my liberty," said the viscount insolently.

"Why dinna ye demand the moon and stars, laddie! I could gie them to ye just as suno," replied Sir Alexander.

"You have no right to detain me in custody!" fiercely broke forth Lord Vincent.

"Whisht, lad, I ha'e no right to set you at liberty, though as ye ask for a short delay of proceeding, in order to get your counsel, which is but reasonable, there is no business on hand but just to remand you and your companion, purr lassie, back to prison for future examination," said the magistrate.

"I remarked to you before, sir, that I object to be remanded to prison, since nothing is proved against me. I totally object!" said the viscount, stubbornly.

"Aye, lad, it appears that ye object to maist things in legal procedure; the whilk is but natural, ye ken, for what saith the poet?

"Nae thief e'er felt the halter draw
WT guid opinion o' the law,"

replied the magistrate, with a touch of caustic humour.

"But, sir, I am ready to give bail to any amount."

"It will na do, lad! The accusation is too grave a one. Na doubt ye would gie me bail, and leg bail to the boot o' that. Na, Malcolm, ye ha'e had your fling, lad, and noo ye'll just ha'e to abide the consequences," replied the magistrate, taking up a pen to sign a document that his clerk laid before him.

"Then I hope, sir, that since we are to be kept in restraint, we shall be placed in something like human quarters; and not in that den of wild beasts, your filthy police-station," said the viscount.

"Oo, aye, surely, lad. Ye shall be made as comfortable as is consistent wi' your safe keeping. Christie, take the prisoners to the gaol, and ask the governor to put them in the best cells at his disposal, as a special favour to myself. And ask him also in my name to be kind and considerate to the female prisoner—purr lassie!" said the magistrate, handing the document to the policeman in question.

The prisoners were removed—Faustina weeping and the viscount affecting to sneer.

Judge Merlin and Ishmael went forth arm-in-arm. Of late the old man needed the support of the young one in walking. Sorrow and anxiety more than age and infirmity had bowed and weakened him.

As the friends walked on, their conversation turned on the case in hand.

"The magistrate seems disposed to be very lenient," said the judge, in a discontented tone of voice.

"Not too lenient, I think, sir! He is evidently very kindly-disposed towards the prisoner, with whose family he seems to be personally acquainted; but, notwithstanding all that, you observe, he is conscientiously rigid in the discharge of his magisterial duties in this case. He would not accept bail for the

prisoner, although by stretching a point he might have done so," replied Ishmael.

"I wonder if he knew that? I wonder if he really knew the extent and limit of his power as a magistrate? I doubt it! I fancy he refused bail in order to keep on the safe side of an uncertainty. For do you know that he impressed me as being a very illiterate man! Why, he speaks as broadly as the rudest Scotch labourer I have met with yet. He must be an illiterate man!"

"Oh, no, sir; you are quite mistaken in him. Sir Alexander McKetchum is a ripe scholar, an accomplished mathematician, an extensive linguist, and, last of all, a profound lawyer. He graduated at the celebrated law school of Glasgow University; at least so I've been assured on good authority," replied Ishmael.

"And speaks in a barbarous lingo like that!" exclaimed the judge.

Ishmael smiled and said:

"I have also been informed that his early life was passed in poverty and obscurity, until the death of a distant relation suddenly enriched him, and afforded him the means of paying his expenses at the university. Perhaps he clings to his rustic style of speech from the force of early habit, or from affection for the accent of his childhood, or from the spirit of independence, or from all three of these motives, or from no motive at all. However, with the style of his pronunciation we have nothing whatever to do. All that we are concerned about is his honesty and ability as a magistrate: and that appears to me to be beyond question."

"Oh, yes, yes, I dare say he will do his duty. I am pleased that he refused bail, and remanded the prisoners."

"Yes, he did his duty in that matter, though it must have been a very disagreeable one. And now, sir, as the prisoners are remanded, and we have nothing more to detain us in Banff, had we not better return to Edinburgh?" suggested Ishmael; for you see, ever since the news of his daughter's misfortunes had shaken the old man's strength, it was Ishmael who had to watch over him, to think for him, and to shape his course.

"Y—yes; perhaps we had. But when I return to Edinburgh, I go to Cameron Court," said the judge hesitatingly.

"The best place for you, sir, beyond all question," "Yes; and by the way, Ishmael, I am charged with an invitation from the countess of Hurst-Monceaux to yourself, inviting you to accompany me on my visit to her ladyship. Would you like to accept it?"

"Very much indeed. I have a very pleasant remembrance of Lady Hurst-Monceaux; though I doubt whether her ladyship will be able to recollect me," said Ishmael, with a smile.

The judge was somewhat surprised at this ready acquiescence. After a short hesitation, he said:

"Do you know that Claudia is staying at Cameron Court?"

"Why, certainly. It was for that reason I favoured your going there. It is, besides, under the circumstances, the most desirable residence for Lady Vincent."

This reply was made in so calm a manner, that any latent doubt or fear entertained by the judge that there might be something embarrassing or unpleasant to Ishmael in his prospective meeting with Claudia, was set at rest for ever.

But how would Claudia bear this meeting? How would she greet the abandoned lover of her youth? That was the question that now troubled the judge.

It did not trouble Ishmael, however. He had no doubts, or fears, or misgivings on the subject. True, he also remembered that there had been a long and deep attachment between himself and Claudia Merlin, though it had remained unspoken.

She had turned from him in his struggling poverty, and had married, for rank and title, another, whom she despised; and he, Ishmael, had conquered his ill-placed passion, and fixed his affections upon a lovelier maiden.

But that all belonged to the past. And now, safe in his pure integrity and happy love, he felt no sort of hesitation in meeting Lady Vincent, especially as he knew that, in order to serve her ladyship effectually, it was necessary that he should see her personally.

But Ishmael never lost sight of the business immediately in hand.

Their walk from the town-hall towards their hotel took them immediately past the Aberdeen stage-coach office. Here Ishmael stopped a moment, to secure places for himself and company in the coach that started at eleven o'clock.

"We shall only have time to reach the hotel and pack our portmanteaus before the coach will call for us. It is a hasty journey; but then it will enable us to catch the afternoon train at Aberdeen, and reach Edinburgh early in the evening," said Ishmael.

And the judge acquiesced.

When they entered the inn, they found that the professor and the three servants were there before them.

Ishmael gave the requisite directions, and they were so promptly executed, that when a few minutes later the coach called, the whole party were ready to start.

The judge and Ishmael rode inside, and the professor and the three servants on the outside; and thus they journeyed to Aberdeen, where they arrived in time to catch the express train that left at two o'clock for Edinburgh.

They reached Edinburgh at five o'clock in the afternoon, and drove immediately to Magruder's Hotel. Here they stopped only long enough to change their travelling dresses and dine.

And then, leaving the three servants in charge of the professor, they set out in a cab for Cameron Court. It was eight o'clock in the evening when they arrived and sent in their cards.

The countess and Claudia were at tea in the little drawing-room when the cards were brought in.

"Show the gentlemen into this room," said Lady Hurst-Monceaux to the servant in attendance.

And in a few minutes the door was thrown open, and—

"Judge Merlin and Mr. Worth"—were announced. The countess arose to welcome her guests.

But Claudia felt all her senses reel as the room seemed to turn around with her.

Judge Merlin shook hands with his hostess and presented Ishmael to her, and then leaving them speaking together, he advanced to embrace his daughter.

"My dearest Claudia, all is well! We have arrested the whole party, the viscount, the valet and the woman. They are lodged in gaol and are safe to meet the punishment of their crimes," he said, as he folded her to his bosom.

But oh! why did her heart beat so wildly, throbbing almost audibly against her father's breast.

He held her there for a few seconds, it was as long as he decently could, and then gently raising her, he turned toward Ishmael and beckoning him to approach, said:

"My daughter, here is an old friend come to see you. Welcome him."

Ishmael advanced and bowed gravely.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Worth," said Claudia in a low voice as she held out her hand. He took it, bowed over it, and said:

"I hope I find you well, Lady Vincent."

And then as he raised his head their eyes met; his eyes—those sweet, truthful, earnest, dark eyes inherited from his mother—were full of the most respectful sympathy. But hers—oh, hers!

She did not mean to look at him so! but sometimes the soul in a crisis of agony will burst all bounds and reveal itself though such revelation were fraught with fate. Grief, shame, remorse and passionate regret for the lost love and squandered happiness that might have been hers, were all revealed in the thrilling, pathetic, deprecating gaze with which she once more met the eyes of her girlhood's young worshipper, her worshipper no longer!

Of all sad words of tongue or pen

The saddest are these, "It might have been."

Only for an instant did she forget herself; and then Claudia Merlin was repressed and Lady Vincent reinstated.

Her voice was calm as she replied:

"It was very kind in you, Mr. Worth, to come so long a distance at so great a cost to your professional interests for the sake of obliging my father and serving me."

"I would have come ten times the distance at ten times the cost to have obliged or served either," replied Ishmael, earnestly, as he resigned her hand, which until then he had held.

"I believe you would. I know you would. I thank you more than I can say," she answered.

"Have you taken tea, Judge Merlin?" inquired the countess, hospitably.

"No, madam; but will be very glad of a cup," answered the judge, pleased with any diversion.

While they sipped their tea, the judge exerted himself to be interesting. He gave a graphic account of the scene in the magistrate's office; the assumption of haughty dignity and defiance on the part of the viscount—the pitiable terrors of the ex-opera singer; and Ishmael, when appealed to, assisted his memory. Claudia was gravely interested; but Lady Hurst-Monceaux was excessively amused.

They were surprised to hear that further proceedings were deferred; but they at last admitted that they would be obliged to be patient under "the law's delays."

Our party spent a pleasant week at Cameron Court. Ishmael occupied himself with making notes for the approaching trials, or with visiting the historical monuments of the neighbourhood.

Judge Merkin devoted himself to his daughter. Lady Hurst-Monceaux studied the comfort of her guests and succeeded in securing it.

And thus the days passed until they received the official summons to appear before Sir Alexander Mc Ketchum at the examination of Lord Vincent and Mrs. Dugald.

(To be continued.)

FIRE PLUME.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEATH-STRUGGLE.

THE scene that met the eyes of Old Bruin when he gazed in the uncertain light around him was one calculated to fire such a heart as his with wild emotions, especially when he could see no way in which he could help those engaged in the desperate encounter.

That the Irishman, Frenchman and negro would prove victorious, though perchance somewhat wounded, he well knew, and consequently all his thoughts were given to the Indian man and woman—whose desperate situation demanded help, and that speedily, as the frantic growling and scratching of the infuriated beast well attested.

Another lull in the storm—another sudden cessation of the blinding sleet, and the changes in the panorama of apparent destruction were clearly revealed to him, and this time the long-hidden sun came and shot fiery arrows of steady light into the gloom.

With one fore-foot upon the breast of the squaw, and the other upon the head of the Whirling Wind—with his long, sharp claws threatening every moment to tear the scalp from the throbbing brain, stood the gigantic, maddened beast, the terror of the western wilds. A single contraction of the monstrous paws and the life would be literally ripped out from either form, and this fatal termination appeared to be hastened by the fierce attack of the brave dog, who unflinchingly retained his hold, paralyzing, in a great measure, its movements; and yet the beast must have dragged him as well as the body of the girl along to where the Indian had fallen, or it could never have so completely obtained the mastery of the field.

A single glance put the old trapper in full possession of these facts, and a single moment given to thought enabled him to determine upon his plan of action. Calmly, as if about to engage in some holiday sport, he laid aside his rifle, stripped himself of his hunting shirt, tightened his belt, placed his knife between his teeth, and grasping his hatchet in his hand, crept slowly forward.

That it was an undertaking almost certainly fraught with death he well knew, but even if his companions had been at liberty, he would have hesitated to have called them, for the task he had undertaken required more of nerve and caution and experience than force or numbers. Nearing the bear, he shouted to attract its attention, hoping thereby that it would leave its prostrate victims; in which case, trammelled as it was by the dog, he could easily retreat to his rifle and shoot it down. A deep growl, however, was the only answer, though the red, glaring eyeballs were fixed firmly upon him, and the giant frame shook with passion.

Creeping still nearer, though fully expecting that each moment would be the last of life for those for whom he was venturing his own, he at length came near enough to lay his hand upon the shaggy hide—to encourage his dog and murmur a few words of consolation to the down-stricken—almost certain death-doomed ones.

"Hold on, Terror—steady, good dog—I'll help you out if you keep quiet—don't stir for your lives—but if you once get clear of those infernal claws, give me a helping hand, Wind," were his words, and then in reality began his task of danger.

To any one it would have been immensely so, but for him, with only a single hand, it can scarcely be estimated. It was his purpose to crawl upon the back of the bear until he could plunge his knife hilt-deep, and then, when stricken with sudden and certain death, to leap to the ground and drag the two human beings from beneath its claws before it could injure them in its fierce, dying struggles.

Hard as it is to conceive that any sane man would undertake such a thing, much less a one-armed one, yet Old Bruin looked confidently to the success of his plan, although he could not disguise from himself the fact that the chances of his own safety were extremely small.

Another word of comfort to his red friend and of command to his dog, and he clutched more deeply the long hair, and at a single spring leaped fairly on the back of the terrible beast.

All his anticipations of the sudden bounding of the beast were falsified, for it stood immovable, although the quick-turning head, snapping jaws, and savage roar told well how little of safety there was in at-

tempting to be the rider of such an unbroken steed. Nothing but the unflinching grip of the dog, however, enabled him to keep his seat after the first moment, perchance one of stupefying astonishment to the monster, for it shook its huge frame with wonderful rapidity and power.

Another move, and the bold and desperate trapper had neared the head. And now he must relinquish his hold, in order to strike the blow on which he so much depended. To his knees alone must he trust, in order to retain his seat, and what if they failed him, and he should become the third beneath those giant claws?

From mouth to hand the knife was changed—the hatchet stuck into the belt—the head lowered so as to see the place to be struck accurately, and the arm raised to give power to the blow. Like the lightning-bolt when riving the knotted oak and splintering the mighty pine, it fell; but the sudden movement of the animal's head rendered it uncertain, the steel was shivered to the very hand that held it. More quickly and far more fiercely than the steed bounds from the spur-armed heel, the bear sprang aloft and sideways, whirling the dog around as if it had been but a feather's weight, and carrying with it the baffled trapper. Forced to retain his seat at all hazards, he dared not use his hatchet, and yet it must be done, or in another moment he would be dragged bodily to the ground by the jaws of his adversary and rent into a thousand pieces.

Yes, the head was turned, the huge teeth ready, the armed mouth stretched open for that purpose, when Old Bruin, seeing that it was his only chance, dealt it a full blow with his hatchet.

As if it had fallen upon a flinty rock, the weapon glanced from the thick skull—thick in itself, and rendered still more difficult to cleave from the mass of matted hair that protected it, and flying from his hand, rendered him weaponless.

Here then was the end! Here the fatal termination at once of his adventure and his life. Whirled over its head, he lay stretched upon the ground, stunned, and completely at the mercy of a brute seeking his very heart's blood!

With eyes almost starting from their sockets by the severe fall he had received, as well as by his recent terrible struggles, he saw the bear advance, dragging the faithful dog after her.

Inch by inch it neared him—gained upon him, although he rolled over and away as well as he was able. And now it had raised its paw to strike—now he could feel its hot breath—see the blood-drops slowly trickling down from the wounds he had inflicted, mark the extreme length and sharpness of its teeth.

Dizzy, blind almost, he waited the tearing blow and the crushing of its massive jaws, and then the report of a rifle burst upon his ears—the sudden, sharp sound that follows the stroke of a hatchet—the ringing warcry of the red man, and once more opening his eyes, he found himself lying side by side with his late furious enemy, and safe.

Rescued thus unexpectedly—providentially—from the very jaws of death, and raised to his feet by the Indian, Whirling Wind, his first thought, after seeing that his rescuer was but slightly injured—so slightly, that he scorned to take any notice of his wounds, was for the squaw who had been the innocent cause of all their danger.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RESCUE.

THEN, when all hope for the white girl was cut off, as it seemed, save from heaven—when the forked flames were wrapping their fiery tongues around her shrinking form—when the stifling smoke was oozing between her scorching fingers and swiftly finding its way to her lungs—when her soul, terror-stricken and torture-wrung, was about to plume its wings for flight to another and a better world, there suddenly burst through the circle of warriors a strangely attired form, that leaping forward with a loud shout, scattered the flaming pile, tore the girl from her perilous situation, and bore her to a place of safety.

No wonder, then, that they took him for some evil spirit—some unknown demon that she, whom they would have burned as a witch, had suddenly conjured up to her relief.

Recovering, however, from their surprise, the red men hastened to separate him from their prisoner, commanded her to be again taken to her wigwam and closely guarded until the further pleasure of the chiefs was known, and then proceeded to question him who had so daringly thwarted their will.

Too late, however, to prevent communication between the twain had the order been given, for the man had found opportunity to whisper in the ear of the girl necessary cautions and assurances of assistance, if not of safety.

Taken to the council lodge, he was catechised by one who understood the language of the white man,

though it must be confessed with little of enlightenment to the swarthy braves around.

"Does the pale-face commune with the Great Spirit?" asked the Indian.

"To be sure I do!" replied the rescuer of the white girl; "and what is more, you must know that I myself carry a little thunder and lightning!" and striking a match, he held it directly under the nose of the chief until the sulphurous fumes almost suffocated him and caused him to draw back in a fright.

He continued striking match after match and throwing them into the astonished circle, who rapidly drew back.

"The man is a —! He carries lightning in his hunting-shirt," said one of the braves.

"That's nothing; we eat fire in our country. Have it three times a day in cold weather. See here!" and stepping to where the embers of the fire that surrounded the girl were still burning, he swallowed living coal after coal. In fact he exhibited to their amazement the old trick so often seen performed by travelling showmen, though never before to such an astonished and terrified audience. Then, before they had time to recover, he continued a series of slight-of-hand performances of a like nature, until not one of the red men dared to venture near him, believing, as he asserted, that he could transform them at his pleasure into any beast or reptile.

"The pale man is a magician of the fire. The flames would touch him not."

"When fire fails, the steel of the red man may reach the heart."

"Let the pale-face be stripped and the torture of the knife begin."

"Let the braves of the Sioux prepare their knives."

"Bind him! To the torture!"

"Just look at this, squaw," and he handed the chief a dagger. "The real, pure silver-steel, A No. 1, warranted not to cut in the eye."

"The weapon of the pale-face is sharp as the tooth of the rattlesnake, pointed as the thorn of the wild apple."

"Well, now," and he took it back again, opened his clothes so as to exhibit his bare breast, and then, after commanding all of them to watch, struck himself a heavy blow with the weapon directly over the heart.

As if startled by a clap of thunder, the red men appeared, when they saw him draw it apparently out from his body, and that without leaving even a trace. They had yet to learn the secret of hollow handles and spring blades, that have often astonished supposed-to-be-enlightened audiences in the very midst of civilization.

"You see, it's no use trying your steel on me."

"The pale-face is a great medicine."

"Why did the pale-face come to the wigwams of the Sioux?"

"The white girl called me!"

As he had expected, this announcement made the timid ones sorely afraid to be near him, and those more bold to look to the great medicine of the tribe for aid, explanations and some counter-charm.

But the medicine man of the tribe avowed himself unable to contend against the mighty powers of the white girl's protector; and so in a council in the chief's lodge it was resolved that she should be given up to him.

Thus did Old Bruin rescue the Spring Spirit from the fiery death that threatened her—thus did the father regain a long-lost daughter.

In explanation of his timely appearance it need only be stated that when the wounds of the Fire Plume had been properly cared for (and slight had they been on account of her feigning to be dead) it required but little time for Old Bruin to learn her story—the why she had come, and all the particulars connected with the history of the Spring Spirit. For some reason he appeared very deeply interested in the matter—so much so that Tom Burke remarked aside to the negro, "that the codd man must be just about thinkin' of committin' matrimony."

Not the most minute particular concerning the girl did the old trapper allow to escape him. The colour of her eyes and hair, her form, age, everything he questioned the Indian girl about. The exact time of her capture by the Sioux, and the colour and texture of her dress having been given him, he sat for a time in silence; and then, as if having solved a very difficult problem to his satisfaction, a smile, transient but vivid as summer lightning, played for a moment over his face, and beckoning to the Indian to follow him, he left the encampment, accompanied, as he ever was, by his good dog Terror.

The remainder of the little band thus left began immediately devoting themselves to the pursuits most congenial to their natures, and whilst the Irishman was pestering the negro, the Frenchman, true to the character of his nation, was attentive to the Fire Plume.



[THE BROTHERS FACE TO FACE.]

THE SECRET CHAMBER.

CHAPTER XX.

To account for what now occurred, we must return to the trooper who had been left on guard below.

Jones was a person of inquisitive mind, and it occurred to him that while his comrade kept watch over the movements of the family above stairs, he would make a foray through the older portion of the building.

The key still remained in the door which opened into the corridor, and he traversed its length and entered the chapel. His quick eye soon caught sight of the lifted flagstone, and while examining it, the open panel also attracted his attention. He exclaimed:

"By Jove! the secret's out. That chap was hid in the garret, and he's somewhere about here, that's certain. The way's been opened for him to get out, and maybe I can trap him before he gets away."

He rushed back to the inhabited portion of the house, called to his comrade, and in a few words informed him of the discovery he had made, at the same time telling him to remain in front of Mrs. Methurn's room, and in five minutes to enter it, while he made his way to the opposite side, for he was certain that a communication existed between the chapel and suite of apartments.

Jones ran back, swiftly mounted the stairs, and moved in the direction in which he knew the rooms were situated. The sound of voices soon guided him, and he crashed through the wardrobe at the moment that the cries from the next room warned him that a scuffle was going on.

The gipsy turned, like a lioness at bay, while Sir Hugh fell back, dropping the pen from his hand, as he gaspingly said:

"Lost! lost! all is lost!"

They were the last articulate words he ever uttered; for the shock had snapped the silver cord, and the hard and sinful soul of the baronet was wrenched from his body in that moment of supreme anguish.

Jones strode to the door, unlocked and threw it open.

Vernor was struggling desperately with his assailant, who had come upon him without warning, while Mrs. Methurn and Ethel, paralyzed by fright, looked on without uttering a cry.

The new-comer grasped the arms of the young man from behind, and in a few moments he was securely bound and placed on a chair.

"Who locked that door?" asked Vernor, savagely.

"But for that, I might have escaped you both. What have you done with my father?"

"I believe he's fainted. Now we've got you safe, I'll look after the old gentleman. Don't be scared, ladies! I ain't going to hurt you, though you did try to hide this young chap among ye."

Mrs. Methurn rushed into the dressing-room, followed by Ethel; and the young girl uttered a loud cry as she beheld Sir Hugh, with fallen jaw and glazing eyes, sitting bolt upright, with his hands still stretched out over the table.

The gipsy and the deed had disappeared.

"This last shock has proved fatal to him," said Mrs. Methurn, with emotion.

"Oh! he cannot be dead, aunty. We must try to bring him round again. Let us get him on the bed, and see what can be done for him."

Mrs. Methurn silently shook her head.

She had gazed on death before, and she knew that the awful fixedness of look before her was the work of the grim conqueror alone.

She placed her hand over the heart of Sir Hugh, and found that not the slightest pulsation remained. His hands were already chilled and rigid, and she reverently said:

"God has mercifully removed him from trouble to come. Go to your room, my child, for this sight is too painful for one of your tender years. I will attend to what must be done here."

But Ethel would not consent to leave her. By this time the two soldiers had entered the room, and in compliance with the request of Mrs. Methurn herself, they lifted the corpse and placed it on a couch that stood in the room.

Vernor called out impatiently:

"What are you all doing in there? Sir Hugh—father, come out; I wish to speak with you. I suppose that privilege at least will not be denied me."

Ethel went to him, pale and trembling.

"Oh, Vernor—poor Vernor, this is a sad blow for you. He will never come to you again. Oh, no—never."

"What do you mean?" he asked, with a scared look. "Don't tell me that anything has happened to my father just now. Has that fellow murdered him?"

"He is dead, but not by violence."

Vernor covered his face with his hands, and she could see that he trembled in every fibre of his frame. Presently he looked up and hoarsely said:

"Then it's all up with me. A prisoner to those who know no mercy, and my father gone, there is no one to stand between me and destruction. I have

ruined you too, Ethel; the remnant of property left to you will barely purchase your own safety."

"Don't talk of that now, Vernor," she gently replied; "I will stand by you to the last, and save you if I can."

Vernor was touched; he gloomily said:

"I have been a villain toward you, Ethel, and that is the truth. I bound you to me that I might gain possession of your fortune, which I have recklessly squandered. Yes—it is nearly all gone, poor little girl, and you will be left to poverty. The estate I should have inherited will be forfeited, and I shall have no means of restitution left. But you will be free again, Ethel, for my life isn't worth a rush."

For the first time for years, Ethel voluntarily drew near him and kissed his pale brow.

In that moment all his indifference to her was forgotten: he suffered—he had few friends to stand by him in the hour of his need, and her young heart overflowed with compassionate tenderness toward him. She put back his tangled hair and softly said:

"If the sacrifice of all I claim can save you, Vernor, I will cheerfully make it. Let us not anticipate evil; there is enough already around us to task all our energies to overcome. Don't give up, dear Vernor. Hope on; God is with us, and He will send us help in the darkest hour."

He bitterly said:

"You may trust in him, for you are good and pure; but I—I dare not ask his protection, for in my hour of elation I spurned the thought that I should ever need it."

Ethel wistfully regarded him. She knew that he had been an habitual scoffer at religion, and this, as much as anything else, had alienated her from him. In the depths of her gentle nature was cradled deep reverence for sacred things, and the prayers offered by this simple heart might have been borne by angels to the throne of grace as an incense worthy of the infinite purity that overshadows it.

Mrs. Methurn came in silently weeping. She placed her hand on Vernor's head, and reverently said:

"The Lord has dealt with his creature. Sir Hugh has escaped the evils we must rouse our courage to face."

"Oh, Aunt Agnes, if he could only have lived a few weeks longer, he might have been able to avert utter ruin from us all; but now, everything is lost. Make up your minds to go with me to prison, for Kirke will come back and take us all away with him."

"If it must be so, I can go. I will write to Gerald of the strait we are in, and he and Mr. Clyde may be able to help us."

"If justice reigned in the land, perhaps they might, but I have no hope from that. Resign yourself to the worst, for Kirke arrests us, and Jeffreys will sit in judgment upon us."

Mrs. Methurn shuddered. The reputation of Jeffreys was well known to her, and the thought of even appearing before him filled her with horror.

The troopers here joined them, and rough as they were, they refrained from saying anything to the unhappy young man to embitter his captivity. Even they had some respect for the lifeless form of him who was so lately the stay and protection of those before them. Vernor haughtily regarded them as he said:

"I may at least be permitted to go in and look upon my dead father for the last time. Free my feet that I may walk."

"If you'll promise not to make a dash, young man, an' try to get off, I'll do you that service," said Jones.

"Stupid! What can I do with my hands thus pinioned? Are not two of you here to guard a bound man?"

The trooper grinned.

"I don't mind your callin' me sich a name, 'cause I've proved sharper than you and the old gentleman to boot. But I rise you to keep a civil tongue in yer head, for the Lamb is used to a word and a blow, an' sometimes the last comes afore there's time to speak the first."

Vernor savagely regarded him, but he only pointed to the cord that bound his feet, and said nothing in reply. Jones severed it with his knife, and he stood an instant balancing in his mind his chances of escape.

While Ethel talked with him alone, she had slightly loosened the handkerchief with which his arms were bound, for the tension appeared painful, and a few cautious movements had convinced Vernor that he could release them without much effort. He said:

"Now I am ready; one of you can keep guard at the door, while the other goes with me into the dressing-room. I shall not be long."

The troopers exchanged glances, and Simpson took his station close behind the door; Vernor walked forward, followed by Jones, and his rapid glance took in the condition of the room. He asked:

"Who guided you to yonder opening?"

"My own wit, and the carelessness of those that came before me. The woman that was in here got away while I was securin' you."

"What woman?" said Vernor, bewildered.

"How should I know? One of the servants, mayhap, what knew the way up."

But the prisoner knew better, and like a flash, the remembrance of the strange gipsy woman came to him. That she had some mysterious connection with his father, that she knew all the secret places of the house, he was aware; and his heart grew faint within him as he remembered how she had kept upon his track for years past. Could she have followed him to England to make his destruction sure? Why she wished evil to him, he did not know, but that she was his deadly and uncompromising enemy, he felt assured.

He approached the couch and looked down on the inanimate form that lay upon it, thinking less of his bereavement, than of the means of escaping from the toils that were closing around him.

Jones peered through the opening in the wardrobe, and muttered comments on its ingenuity. He found the saw, and said aloud:

"The gal got this, but how she brought it up I don't know. She's a sharp un, an' needs looking after a bit."

Vernor glared furtively at him; the door communicating with the outer room had swung partly to; Jones was on his knees groping in the wardrobe, and seizing the opportunity, he elipped the handkerchief from his arm, and at a bound, closed the door, turned the lock, and then sprang upon the trooper. As Jones arose, he struck him a heavy blow upon the head, dashed through the opening, and was half-way across the garret before the man regained his stunned senses sufficiently to pursue him.

But Kirke's Lamb was too hard-headed to be long bewildered, even by such a blow as the one just dealt on the trooper's head, and as Vernor approached the stairway he heard his adversary in hot pursuit. Dashing wildly forward, he cleared the steps at a bound, landed on the chapel floor, and closed the panel.

As he paused to take breath, a figure emerged from behind a pillar, which he instantly recognized as that of the Gipsy Queen.

"What has brought you here?" he fiercely asked. "What were you doing in my father's room to-day? You have dogged my steps for years, and now you have come to deliver me over to destruction."

"You speak the truth," she recklessly replied. "The rope is made that will soon hang you, and I have done my best to put it around your neck, though

you have bravely helped me yourself. The sleuth-hound is on your track, and you need not hope to escape him. You are rushing now upon your fate."

"Who are you? and why have you pursued me thus for evil?"

"The dead man that lies above, can no longer stand between us, and since your race is almost run, I will tell you what you wish to know. I am she who should have been Lady Methurn; to whom every sacred pledge was given, and ruthlessly broken. My son is the son of your father, and your own elder brother; yet you have dared to strike him. Go on, Vernor Methurn, and meet the retribution due to that cowardly blow. I do not attempt to stop you; hasten before the trooper breaks through the wall, for he is striking at it at a fearful rate."

Jones, in truth, was hammering against the panel with all his force, and as a crashing sound was heard as if it was splintering beneath his blows, Vernor again bounded forward, and disappeared through the opening in the floor.

He had no thought at that moment for the revelation which had just been made to him; his only care was for his own safety.

The gipsy again stepped behind the sheltering pillar, leaving Jones to force his way into the chapel. She knew that the fugitive was in her power, for by this time her son must be at his station with the party of which he had gone in quest, and since nothing else would be gained by the day's work, Melchoir might at least gain the reward offered for his brother's apprehension.

The trooper at length smashed the panel, and with the impetus of the last blow, rolled out upon the floor. As he regained his feet, a confused sound of voices and cries came up from the vaults, and before he could gain the stairs leading into them, a party of four men, led by Melchoir, came up, bringing the fugitive with them a prisoner. Vernor had gone but a few yards below, when they closed around him, and pinioned him in such a manner as to render resistance ineffectual.

CHAPTER XXI

WHEN Kirke left the Priory he divided his men into two squads, one of which kept watch upon the grounds, while the other proceeded to make domiciliary visits to some of the neighbouring families who had also been implicated in the rebellion.

Melchoir found the pickets patrolling around the domain, and he speedily gave the officer in command the information that the quarry they sought was safely caged within the old house. The three men he requested were sent with him to the vaults, while the remainder gradually drew near to the walls and enclosed them with a cordon of armed men.

A messenger was sent to Kirke informing him of the state of affairs, and at the moment Vernor was brought into the chapel, he dashed up to the door, followed by the remainder of his troop. Their loud and disorderly entrance filled the whole building with clamour, and their commander, with angry and inflamed visage, stalked through the room of Sir Hugh, and traversed the corridor with furious haste. He gained the chapel, and a gleam of ferocious joy lighted up his features as he saw the prisoner standing before him bound and helpless.

"Well, your wings are clipped at last," he said, with a coarse laugh. "You've led me a pretty dance—you and that deceiving old father of yours! Where is he? I'll make him feel that it is not safe to trifle with one of his Majesty's officers, as he has done with me to-day."

Vernor disdainfully regarded him.

"My father, thank heaven! is beyond the reach of your malice. You nor any one else will annoy him more."

"Why, what does the youngster mean? Where is Sir Hugh, I say? Bring him before me, that I may signify my pleasure to him in this conjuncture of affairs. I'll take the old sinner where he'll find cause to repent of his evil deeds!"

"You're spared that trouble, sir," said Jones. "The old gentleman's gone a longer journey than you can take him. When I jumped in on the hidin'-place of the young un, he jest fell back, an' give up the ghost!"

"Dead!" said Kirke. "Do you mean that his tough old heart actually broke when he learned that his young scapegrace was in the toils? Bless my soul! I had no idea he had so much sensibility."

"He's dead sure, sir! Mebbe, you'll come up, an' see where the youngster was stowed away, an' you can see for yourself that Sir Hugh 'll never breathe again in this world."

Giving orders for the prisoner to be removed to the hall and securely guarded, Kirke strode after his satellite, and mounted to the garret. He carefully surveyed his route, and said:

"Cleverly contrived, faith; and the panel is so well concealed behind the pillar that no one would have

suspected its existence. I was certain the young man had taken refuge here, and I intended to stay in the neighbourhood until he was taken."

When they gained the opening into the dressing-room he forced his burly form through it, and stepping out, stood before the two affrighted ladies, who were kneeling before the couch on which the body of Sir Hugh lay.

Mrs. Methurn extricated herself from Ethel's clinging arms, and arose with dignity, while the poor girl turned her pallid face toward him and pointed appealingly to the lifeless form of the baronet.

Mrs. Methurn said:

"I trust that Colonel Kirke will treat these remains with the respect that is due to them."

The rude soldier lifted his hat in the presence of death, and replied:

"He's done his last wrong, ma'am, and gone where Jeffreys can't reach him, which I can't say I'm sorry for. Sir Hugh was a liberal man, and I'll see him put decently in the family vault before we go. But I'm sorry to say that you and this young lady must go with me to Taunton as soon as the job's completed."

"Can we not be permitted to remain here till our presence is necessary there?"

"I had agreed to that; but now it is impossible. You have helped to conceal that young fellow, thus making matters worse for yourselves than they would have been."

"Has he escaped?" asked Ethel. "If he has, I can bear imprisonment."

"If he had escaped through your connivance, it would have been the worse for you, young lady. But he is safe in the custody of my men. Jones tells me that you must have slipped the bandage with which his arms were bound, or he could never have freed them as he did. Since we've caught him, it don't matter; but if he had got off it would have gone hard with you."

"Oh, I could have borne anything if he had gained his freedom," she said, with a burst of tears. "Come, aunt, let us prepare to meet the evil fate that has encompassed us."

"Yes—get ready to be judged by the hardest man in England, or, for that matter, in the world. But don't be down-hearted, for Jeffreys has a taste for beauty, and you are rather a pretty little thing. Only don't spoil your eyes with crying; you'll find a better use for them in looking out for another husband after this one is put out of the way."

Ethel shrank from the brutal man with an expression of horror, and looking as indignant as she felt at such language, Mrs. Methurn drew her away. She paused at the door, and asked:

"How long may we remain beneath this roof, sir?"

"Till my men have had a good dinner provided for them, ma'am, and we have had time to knock up a box to put the old gentleman in. He was fond of his glass, and I hope there will be good wine to be drunk at his funeral banquet. I rely on your respect for the deceased to order a repast suited to his quality, for my lambs are used to the best the country affords."

"They shall have the best we have," replied the lady; "but you must be aware of the difficulty of obtaining sufficient food for a whole troop of horsemen at so short a notice. Our family is not large, and it will take time to send to the village."

"Zounds, madam! kill the fatted calf—kill his mother, if necessary, for I shall not budge from the Priory till I have partaken of its hospitality. The Methurns were not wont to be niggards, and if their fortunes have fallen, there is still enough left to feed his Majesty's soldiers."

Mrs. Methurn did not reply to this rude speech—she merely bent her head and left the room.

No sooner were they alone than Ethel threw herself upon her bosom and wept the tears she had with difficulty restrained in the presence of the troopers. But she soon aroused herself from this indulgence of feeling, and proceeded to pack up such articles of clothing as herself and Mrs. Methurn would need during their stay in Taunton.

What their fate might be she could not foresee, and such terrible stories were told of Jeffreys and his summary proceedings towards those implicated in the rebellion, that she feared the worst, but the latent vein of heroism in her nature was fully aroused, and she felt within herself a power to sustain the heaviest blows of misfortune if Vernor could only escape the fate that menaced him.

The death of Sir Hugh had been a great shock, but he had never been fond of her, and she had always regarded him with more fear than affection. At such a crisis it was a great calamity, but she had faith to believe that God would bring good out of evil to those who trusted in his power, and with this consoling belief she wiped away her tears, and set herself earnestly to the task before her.

Mrs. Methurn had far more difficulty in the on-

she had undertaken. Messengers were despatched to the village, and to farmer Conway's to request that provisions might be sent up to the Priory; but the day was rapidly waning away before the banquet was ready for the impatient and often clamorous soldiers; for Kirke allowed his men the widest liberty when not engaged in actual service.

A rough coffin was procured for Sir Hugh, and with little ceremony he was placed in it and conveyed to the family vault, which was situated in the rear of the chapel. Vernor and the two ladies were permitted to be present, and with fear and trembling the curate of the parish came to read the burial service over his body. When he asked leave to do so, Kirke replied:

"It isn't much good they'll do such an old reprobate now, Mr. Parson; but as it is customary, I won't refuse. I'm called a brute, and sometimes I act like one, but the devil, you know, is not so black as he is painted. The women would feel horrified if the old fellow was put away like a dog, and somehow that little girl interests me. The poor thing has been made a victim by Sir Hugh and that scamp of a son; they have ruined her, I know, and this affair will swallow up the last fragment of her fortune. Somehow I pity her, though I don't often care for those the fortune of war throws in my hands."

"Miss Ethel is a sweet young lady," replied the curate. "I taught her Latin, and the mysteries of calculation, and she was always a docile pupil. I do hope you will try and befriend her in the evil strait into which she has fallen."

"As to that, my power over her fate ceases when I deliver her to the authorities at Taunton. Jeffreys will then will be the arbiter of her destiny."

The curate shuddered.

"Oh, sir! he is a merciless man, and this is such a young girl. I—I'm told, sir, that those he cannot hang he will condemn to be sold as slaves in the West Indies. Think of it, sir! such a delicate young lady as this to be sent away as a slave to that wild and unhealthy country."

Kirke laughed bitterly:

"It's good enough for the most of those who will be sent there; but Viscount Clifden will never let his niece, and the heiress to his estate, be sent into exile. It would be too great a stain upon his noble family."

The listener shook his head dubiously:

"If it depends on him, he won't raise his finger to help her; for if it had not been for Mrs. Methurn, I do not know what would have become of the poor child when her mother died."

"It would have been a great deal better for her if she had never seen one of the family, for they have bound her to a worthless prodigal in her childhood, and he has made away with the earnings of her uncle. When this affair has been settled, she won't have a shilling left. I hope Master Vernor will get his deserts for his treatment of her!"

"Oh, sir! surely they will not destroy the heir to an ancient family like that of the Methurns, which dates back to the Norman conquest. They have held an honourable place in the land for many generations."

"It's a pity, then, that they have degenerated so much, for the old baronet and his son are poor specimens. If Sir Hugh had lived a few months longer, he might have saved the estate from forfeiture; but now it will go to the Crown, and the heir will hang, very likely."

The poor curate regarded him with silent horror. The family at the Priory had been his patrons, and from him the younger people had received the greater portion of their education. For Vernor he had less affection than for Gerald, but he could not think of the fate that threatened him without the bitterest regret.

While performing the last services for the deceased baronet, his voice faltered and his eyes filled with tears many times; and, in a parting interview with Mrs. Methurn, he promised her to look in frequently at the Priory, and see how things went on during her enforced absence.

She made an effort to look hopeful, as she said:

"I trust that we shall be permitted to return before long. If we do not, I hope, Mr. Panton, that you will remember the poor people I have been in the habit of looking after."

He promised to do so, and asked:

"Will not Mr. Gerald come to your assistance, ma'am? He's a lawyer, and he will know the rights of the case. It seems hard that you and Miss Ethel should be taken away from your home for such a trifle."

"I have written to Gerald, and I shall send my letter from Taunton."

"Will they really put you in prison, ma'am? It's a dreadful place, for I've been there to visit a friend. That was several years ago; but the place is no better now—nay, it is worse, for a malignant fever is raging among the people confined there."

Mrs. Methurn shivered:

"My poor Ethel! it will be terrible to take her into the midst of infection. I must make every effort to escape that danger. Kirke is rough and brutal, but he has the reputation of being also very venal. He has power to serve us, and a liberal bribe may induce him to permit Ethel and myself to remain at Mr. Digby's till we have to appear in court."

"If he does, ma'am, he will be more lenient to you than he was to Miss Digby; for I know that she was arrested and thrown into prison. She took the fever, and was taken back to her father's house when they found she could not live unless she was removed from the den into which they had thrown her. She lies there now at the point of death."

"Poor Alice! so young and so unfortunate. Yet my own darling may fare no better."

She lowered her voice, and went on:

"I have been told that Kirke and Jeffreys play into each other's hands, and are cruel, or kind, according to the ability of the party arrested to pay for lenient treatment. I have a hundred pounds by me, which I have saved since Gerald went into Mr. Clyde's office; perhaps that will purchase permission for us to remain under Mr. Digby's roof. It would be too cruel to throw us into the midst of infection."

"Kirke seems to feel for Miss Ethel, ma'am, and I think the half of the money will bribe him to let you both remain with your friends. But no sum will keep Mr. Vernor out of prison; they are too much afraid that he will escape. He has shown such spirit and determination that they will not consent to lose sight of him for an hour."

Mrs. Methurn sighed heavily.

"I am aware of that, and I have no hope of keeping him with us. To save Ethel from contact with such misery and degradation, is the utmost I expect to accomplish. You advise me, then, to make the trial with Kirke?"

"I think you may venture to do so, ma'am. He can only refuse, and you will be no worse off than you are now."

Thus counselled, Mrs. Methurn sought an opportunity of speaking with Kirke, who at first utterly refused to listen to such a proposal. He declared that the two ladies must go to prison, as many others of as high station had done before; that he had no power to change their destination, but when he found that the widow had money of her own with which to purchase indemnity, he softened his tone, and after many manoeuvres to find out how much she was able to give, he finally consented to accept sixty pounds, and allow Ethel and her protectress to take refuge in the house of Mr. Digby till the day of their trial arrived.

When Mrs. Methurn ventured to mention Vernor, his face darkened, and he abruptly said:

"You can do nothing for the young man, madam. He must be made to feel all the rigours of imprisonment to bring him to the point that is desired. He is sullen and uncompromising, but I have dealt with as hard cases before now, and I shall yet make him take the only course that can save his own life, and at the same time serve the government."

"If it is your purpose to tempt him to treachery toward those with whom he has been leagued, I trust that he will preserve his honour even at the sacrifice of life," she replied, with spirit.

"Ho! ho! that's fine talking, madam; but at his years life is very precious, and he will be likely to value it above what you call his honour. Monmouth's cause is lost, and by giving up some documents he has concealed, your nephew will not injure those who are already condemned; he will only give a colour of justice to their execution."

"If he gives them up, will he be released without the formality of a trial?"

"By no means; that Jeffreys will never forego. If life is spared in return for this service, it will be the utmost that will be granted. Heavy punishment will be meted out to him, the least of which will be the forfeiture of his title and estate. As to what further sentence Jeffreys may pronounce upon him, I cannot say. The young man has led a sally profligate life, and the best you and the young lady can do, is to take care of yourselves, and let him sink or swim as fate may direct."

"But he is my nephew and Ethel's husband, and we cannot be indifferent to his fate."

"If your positions were reversed, I fancy he would be indifferent enough to yours. I am sufficiently acquainted with Mr. Vernor Methurn's past life to know that he is utterly selfish and hard-hearted; and if the law hangs him out of the way of this poor child, who has been made the victim of his rapacity, it will be the better for her. Excuse me, madam; I am blunt and free-spoken, and I'm not used to dealing with ladies. But my advice to you is, to let the young man bear the burden of the calamity he has brought upon you all."

Mrs. Methurn turned away with a sad heart; she

would gladly have averted from Vernor the penalty of his late acts had she possessed the power to do so, but she was helpless to aid him in any way.

Vernor was strictly guarded in one of the lower rooms, and no opportunity of speaking with him had been allowed the two ladies, save when they stood beside the bier when the funeral services were being performed.

He had then said briefly:

"Take care of yourself and Ethel, Aunt Agnes. It's all up with me, and I must bear my fate like a man. I have brought evil enough upon you without hanging as a millstone upon you now. Leave me to my own deserts."

The house for many hours was a scene of riot and confusion, from which Mrs. Methurn was glad to take refuge in the seclusion of her own apartments.

The late dinner was served, for Conway sent up a waggon-load of provisions, and the people of the village, anxious to prove their loyalty, furnished everything they thought the troopers would need.

The wine-cellar was searched, and a sufficient store of both wine and ale were found to intoxicate the whole party.

Few would have believed that the shadow of death rested upon that house which rang with bacchanalian songs and roistering laughter.

The feast was turned into a wild revel, and it was late in the night before the troopers staggered from the table.

Under these circumstances, Kirke postponed his departure till the following morning, for among his troop but one sober man was to be found.

That was Simpson, to whom the custody of Vernor was delegated, with the assurance that if he permitted him to escape, his own life should be the forfeit.

He knew the threat would be fulfilled, and he had sufficient forbearance to refrain from indulging himself for the present, as he knew that at the next carouse his own turn would come, and the troopers had many houses to visit on similar errands before their work was completed.

He tried to while away the time in conversation with his prisoner, but Vernor sat wrapped in gloomy silence, thinking over his ruined fortune and blighted future.

What the gipsy had told him recurred to his memory, and in his heart he cursed her for her agency in bringing about his capture.

Minchen and her son were still in the house, and Melchior watched for an opportunity to come into the presence of his brother, that he might gratify his deep hatred by seeing him bound and helpless before him.

The drunken troopers had sunk down upon the floor in a heavy sleep, and the house was at last quiet, when the young gipsy came stealthily towards the door beside which Simpson held watch. He offered the trooper a tankard of ale and a piece of money, and whispered:

"Let me pass—let me see my foe in the toils, and I will be your friend for life."

"Gad! you're the fellow that set the men on the right scent—you helped to nab him, and I don't suppose you'd care to help him off."

"I'd throttle him first!" was the fierce response. "I wish to witness his humiliation—to gloat on his sufferings. He degraded me once by cowardly blows, but now, I think, we are quits. Let me pass, good fellow, and it shall not be the worse for you. When I get my share of the reward for taking him, I'll remember you."

"This ale is good, this money is genuine, and I don't see any objection to granting what you ask. Go in and speak your mind to the sullen youngster, who wouldn't answer a civil remark I made to him a while ago."

Simpson sat down to enjoy his tankard, and Melchior glided past him, and stood before his detested brother.

Vernor's feet were securely bound to a large table, near which he was placed, and a leathern belt belonging to his guard was strapped round his waist, and buckled to the chair on which he sat. Handcuffs were placed upon his wrists, and his head was bent down above them, his long hair flowing in matted locks over the table.

He did not heed the entrance of his visitor, and the sound of Melchior's voice caused him to start and lift his pale face.

An expression of triumphant scorn was upon the one that confronted him, and the gipsy tauntingly said:

"Do you remember the day we met in the wood-lawn years ago, when you insulted and outraged me by using your horsemanship upon my shoulders? See—here is the scar left by those blows. I shall bear it to my grave, but now it burns no longer, for it has been dearly avenged."

He laid bare his shoulder as he spoke, and a long red line was visible to upon the dusky flesh.

Vernor said:

"You are mad; the blow I gave could have left no such mark as that through all these long years."

"Perhaps not; but I rendered it indelible by burning it out with caustic. I wished it to remain as a witness between you and me, for I swore to pursue you to the death for the indignity you then put upon me; on me, your father's son—your own elder brother."

"If we are really brothers, it is very strange that you have so bitterly resented an outbreak of temper on my part. Had I known the tie that exists between us, I should have forbore to strike; but Sir Hugh never informed me that I had such a relative in existence."

A sudden hope, wild as unbounded, dawned on Vernor. This strange being had probably repented of the part he had taken in his capture. He had possibly gained access to him to aid him to escape, and he eagerly regarded him as he slowly went on:

"If I had known you were of my father's blood I should have held my hand. Why did you not tell me then, in place of brooding over the injury till it has made your heart bitter toward me. The tie of consanguinity is strong, and should not be lightly severed. Be a brother to me in this strait, and I pledge myself to recognize you as such, and to provide for you as my father's son when I have made terms with the government. I have the means of regaining all I have lost, if you will only help me to regain my freedom."

The face of Melchior was a curious study while Vernor thus spoke; anger, incredulity and scorn were all blended in its expression; and he savagely said:

"If I thought you had such power, I would destroy you as you sit bound and helpless before me. Craven! do you dare to appeal to me—to me, to respect the tie that unites us, when, if you were free and prosperous, it would be scouted with contempt? It is well for you, a bound captive with the sword suspended by a hair above your head, to talk of befriending me, the unfettered son of the forest. I am already provided for, thanks to the munificent government which offered a large reward for your capture. I pointed out your place of concealment—I surrendered you to the men who secured you, and for this service I am entitled to the sum offered. I scorn your offers of service, and refuse to be known as the kinsman of a traitor and villain—for such you know yourself to be, Vernor Methurn."

Hope died out of the listener's heart as he looked upon the speaker, and hearkened to his bitter words. His head again dropped upon the table, and he feebly said:

"Leave me—I wish to be alone. Since my father's son can give me over to destruction, I need hope for mercy from no other quarter."

"No, expect no mercy—and know that if it were extended to you, I would be upon your track again working for your ruin."

"What benefit would my death be to you? You could never become the heir of a Methurn."

"Perhaps not; but you shall never fill the position that should have been mine. Since I, the eldest born, cannot reign in my father's place, you shall never do so."

"To what end have you sought me?" asked Vernor, in an irritated tone. "Is it only to taunt and annoy me?"

"I came hither to triumph over you; to bring to you some of the humiliation you have made me suffer; to gloat upon the sight of your fettered form, and hug to my heart the certainty that you cannot escape the doom that hangs over you."

"You have performed your mission. Go now, or I will call out and let Kirke know that his orders have been infringed by permitting you to enter here."

"Call, and welcome; the beastly troopers are too drunk to hearken to you; but I have said all I intended, and I bid you adieu for the present. I shall witness your condemnation; I shall be present at your ignominious execution, and then I shall go upon my way, satisfied that retribution has fallen where it is due."

He waved his hand, and passed from the room. Vernor's lip curled, and his eyes flashed as he muttered:

"I shall foil you all yet—and you, wretched cur, shall feel the weight of my vengeance for the insults of this hour. I hate and abhor you as deeply as you can loathe me."

His head sank down, and overcome with weariness, he slept, in spite of his uncomfortable position.

(To be continued.)

THE SHEFFIELD FLOOD.—A very curious incident of the flood occurred in the garden of the Rev. Mr. Wright, of Philadelphia House, curate of St. Philip's Church, Sheffield. Mr. Wright's garden is separated from the road by a wall about eight feet high. The flood seems to have risen some eighteen inches higher

than the wall, but not high enough to extinguish the street lamp by the road side. Inexplicable sounds were heard from the garden during the night, and when day had dawned the garden was found to be covered over with a deep bed of mud, in which was a poor horse in a half-erect position. He had been carried on the crest of the wave over the wall. On examination he was found to be alive, though in a greatly exhausted state. Some food was given to him, and after a time he was able to be led to a stable, where, with due care, he is doing well. The case is the more singular as the animal had on his halter, which was attached to a stone of some 16 lbs. weight.

USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.—The Persians, as ancient writers inform us, used to teach their sons to ride, to pay their debts, and to tell the truth.

SCIENCE.

A MOUNTAIN OF SALT IN LOUISIANA.—There is a Salt Mountain, situated about six miles west of New Iberia, La. It was only discovered in August, 1862. They are sending about 300 barrels per day into the Confederacy. It seems that the whole mountain is one pure lump of salt, there being but very little soil over it.

ARTESIAN WELLS IN THE DESERT.—Modern science is literally making "the desert to blossom as the rose." In the great desert of Sahara in 1860, five artesian wells had been opened, around which vegetation thrives luxuriantly; thirty thousand palm-trees and one thousand fruit-trees were planted, and two thriving villages established. At the depth of a little over five hundred feet, an underground river or lake was struck, and from two wells live fish have been thrown up, showing that there is a large body of water underneath.

A PINT OF WATER.—A pint of water may be evaporated by two ounces of coal. In its evaporation it swells into two hundred and sixteen gallons of steam, with a mechanical force sufficient to raise a weight of thirty-seven tons a foot high. The steam thus produced has a pressure equal to that of common atmospheric air; and by allowing it to expand, by virtue of its elasticity, a further mechanical force may be obtained, at least equal in amount to the former. A pint of water, therefore, and two ounces of common coal, are thus rendered capable of doing as much work as is equivalent to seventy-four tons raised a foot high.

GUNS AND PROJECTILES.

It is impossible to look at an Armstrong gun without great admiration for the beauty of its manufacture; and its performance is astounding for accuracy if compared with most other patterns. Independent, however, of the defects of its method of breech-loading, it seemed marked out from the beginning as a provisional weapon only. Projectiles composed of two metals could only be regarded as substitutes for the best mode of making and discharging projectiles made entirely of iron or steel. The grooving of the Armstrong gun, although very beautiful, was a recurrence to a plan not found to be the best in small arms. A multiplicity of small, sharp grooves with a moderate twist marked the weapon as likely to lose much power by needless friction, and not to be able to attain a maximum of velocity or range. So successful has Mr. Whitworth been in this matter that, as Sir Emerson Tennent states, "The average initial velocity of a sixty-eight pound spherical shot thrown from a smooth bore, with a charge of one-quarter its weight of powder, is 1,600 ft. in a second, and this it very speedily loses. On the other hand, with a shot of the same spherical form, but rifled to fit the gun, Mr. Whitworth obtains an initial velocity of 2,200 ft. in a second." This increase of velocity is obtained by the accurate fit of the projectile, and consequent prevention of the escape and wastes of the gases into which gunpowder is resolved.

In the Armstrong pattern the gain would be less, because the friction is so much more. Sir William estimates the force required to squeeze his twelve-pound shot into the grooves of his cannon at several tons, "whereas in the Whitworth gun, the shot being already rifled and fitted to the bore, it may be started and drawn through the barrel with a silken thread." The advantage of great velocity and capacity for extreme range, is not confined to distant shots, as it is a most important element in facility of hitting any object whose distance is not exactly known. Suppose it possible for a projectile to move in a straight line from the muzzle of the gun to the object shot at, no change of elevation would then be required for different distances. Now the nearer you can approximate the path, or trajectory, of a projectile to a straight line, the less it matters whether you guess the distance a little more or less. If the projectile goes high up in the air above the object, and then rapidly tumbles down to it in a descending curve, accurate shooting

may be managed at targets whose exact distance is known; but an error of a few yards in guessing the distance and arranging the elevation would cause an object that was not very tall to be entirely missed. Again, in firing at an advancing body of men, the ball that goes up in the skies and then plumps down, is very unlikely to hit more than one if the best aim be taken, while the comparatively straight-going ball may knock down a dozen, one behind the other.

DETECTION OF DANGEROUS LAMP OILS.—At a late meeting of the Association of Medical Officers of Health, on the reading of a paper by Mr. Tegetmeier upon this subject, a discussion arose on the propriety of raising the standard of the Petroleum Act. It was considered that it should be increased from 100 deg. to 125 deg. Fahr., many fatal accidents having occurred from the use of oils of so low an inflammable point as 100 deg. It was shown some months since that certain paraffin oils ignited at a temperature much below that which is compatible with safety. In carrying out that suggestion the medical officers of health of the metropolis have performed a duty which was manifestly presented to them. It is lamentable to observe the ignorance which prevails in the public mind on this subject, an ignorance which is attempted to be perpetuated by interested parties.

RAILWAY VIBRATIONS.

UPON the question of the injury from the vibrations of railways, the *Building News* says that Mr. John Fowler, during his examination before the joint committee upon the proposed new metropolitan railways, made some important observations. He said that he tunnelled under several houses without interfering with them while the Metropolitan Railway was in course of construction. There was no difficulty in doing it; it was only a question whether it would be more expensive to do it or pull down the buildings. During the execution the company had to buy property and to compensate for property. Applications had not been made since the railway had been opened for compensation for injury done to houses near the line of the railway by the vibration. In some cases it was found to be better to tunnel under it; in other cases, it was found better to take it down, depending upon the value of the property. Mr. Fowler also stated that there was no vibration which shook the lamps and chandeliers. He had been in a house under which the line goes, when trains had been passing, and there had not been so much noise as would be caused by the passing of a cab in the street. As a rule, a railway passing under a street created less vibration than the passing of any vehicle. Perhaps that which created most vibration was one of Pickford's railway vans at a trot; there they had weight and speed. There had been no action for damages since the company had been established.

WHAT IS SOUND.—Would there be such a thing as sound were there no ears for the vibration of the air to act upon it? In every discussion, the first point to be settled is, whether the matter in dispute is a questioned fact or statement, or whether it is the meaning of a word. If the latter, the question is to be settled by a reference to authorities. No man can affix a new, arbitrary meaning to any word. Words have the meanings which have been assigned to them by the usage of good writers, and they can be properly used only with the significations thus established. By referring to Webster you will find that the word "sound" has two meanings. It means the impression made on the ear by certain vibrations in the air, and it is also used to signify the vibrations themselves. There would, therefore, be such a thing as sound were there no ears for the vibration of the air to act upon.

STEAM ON THE TOW-PATH.

In this progressive age, it would appear singular that there have been no efforts made to substitute the iron horse for that raw-boned animal that slowly drags his life away upon the tow-paths of our numerous canals. A very slight modification or alteration would be necessary, before this revolution could be accomplished, and I think we may look for its fulfilment at no distant period. Along the line of the present tow-path the iron rails could be laid, and for convenience the heel path or opposite bank can be similarly accommodated, resulting in what is now considered the *par excellence* of rail-roading—a double track, and with all its well-known advantages. The same system of stations, switches, and time-tables, &c., which exist on our inland railroads could be introduced, and instead of the one solitary boat now seen creeping along at a snail's pace, the twin relic of the stage-coach of the past, they would number the capacity of the engine to carry them along at a rate of ten to fifteen miles per hour, at a cost not exceeding that of the single boat with the horseflesh propelling power of to-day.

The difficulties of ascending grades, or the passage of locks, could be easily overcome by having a boat in the van of the train, which we might call the

tender, provided with a track on its deck, upon which the engine could be placed, and rise to the succeeding level through the lock. A turn-table would be necessary below and above each lock and the tender with its track on deck, should be sufficiently low to correspond with the level of the tow-path, to facilitate the loading and unloading of the engine. This system has the advantage over the introduction of propellers, from the greater amount of tonnage that an engine on the rail can draw, which is impracticable for the propeller in such shallow water, without washing the embankments away by the great agitation of the water. I think if you were to suggest some ideas bearing upon this subject it might lead to some important results.—JOHN LIPPINCOTT.

A GHOST STORY.

A STRANGE story is told in connection with the report of the murder at sea on board of the barque Pontiac, of Liverpool, by Jean Moyatos, a Greek sailor, now in custody in Edinburgh. We do not know whether the particulars we are about to relate have come out in the investigation, but undoubtedly they have a strong bearing on the case, and make it probable that but for the hallucination of one of the crew—not the Greek sailor—the murder would not have happened.

It may be remembered that on the 13th October last, five days after the Pontiac left Callao, Jean Moyatos murdered one of his fellow seamen, and stabbed another in such a dangerous manner that his life was despaired of. Two nights before the fatal occurrence, the mate of the Pontiac was standing near the man at the helm, no other person being on the quarter-deck at the time, when the latter in great terror called out:

"What is that near the cabin-door?"

The mate replied that he saw nothing, and looked about to see if any one was near, but he failed to discover any person. The steersman, then, much terrified said the figure he saw was that of a strange-looking man, of ghostly appearance, and almost immediately afterwards exclaimed:

"There he is again, standing at the captain's window!"

The mate, though in view of the captain's window, saw no figure near it, nor at any part of the quarter-deck, though he looked round and round. Next day the report went from one to the other that a ghost was on board, which filled some of the sailors with alarm, while others made a jest of it. Next night a boy (a stowaway) was so dreadfully alarmed in his bunk by something he saw or felt (we do not know which) that he cried out so loudly as to waken all the seamen in bed. The boy was sure it was the ghost seen the previous night that had frightened him; and others of more mature years were inclined to think so too.

Perhaps more than one-half on board believed that something supernatural was in the ship, and that some calamity was about to happen. But there were two on board who did not believe the ghost stories, and these were the man who was murdered and his companion who was stabbed. The former joked with the boy about the ghost, and said he would have his knife well sharpened and ready for the ghost if it appeared next night. He would give it a stab, and "cluck" it overboard. The latter joined in the joke, saying he also would help "to do" for the ghost, and others said they would have letters ready for the ghost to carry to their friends in the other world.

Jean Moyatos overheard what was said as to stabbing and throwing overboard, and in consequence of his imperfect knowledge of the English language, and having previously supposed there was a combination against him, thought the threats were made against him, and therefore resolved to protect himself.

A few hours after the jesting we have explained took place, he stabbed the two men who principally carried on the jest, with the fatal result known. The murder, as might be expected, filled every one on board with horror; and the terror of the sailors who believed there was a ghost on board was overwhelming. At night, whether in bed or on watch on deck, they had great dread, which was heightened by reports that strange noises were heard below.

Not even at the end of the voyage had the fear been overcome; for after the ship was moored in the docks two of the crew who had agreed to sleep on board became so frightened after their companions were paid off that they refused to remain in the vessel at night.

THE RECONCILIATION DRAWING-ROOM.—At night in the drawing-room, though my face was swelled; it could not be put off. The king spoke not to the prince nor none of his friends but the Duchess of Shrewsbury, who spoke once in vain; but the second time she said, whining, "Je suis venue, sire, pour faire ma cour, et je la veux faire." It happened Lady

Essex Robertes was in the circle when our folks came in, so they all kept at the bottom of the room, for fear of her, which made the whole thing look like two armies drawn up in battle array; for the king's court was all at the top of the room, behind the king, and the prince's court behind him. The prince looked down, and behaved prodigious well. The king cast an angry look that way every now and then; and one could not help thinking 'twas like a little dog and a cat—whenever the dog stirs a foot, the cat sets up her back, and is ready to fly at him. Such a crowd was never seen, but not only curiosity but interest had brought it together. It had been used to keep the drawing-rooms so empty for some time, there were hardly six women at once, to show the necessity of a reconciliation, and that the people were disgusted.—*Diary of Mary Countess Comper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714-1720.*

A LESSON IN CIVILIZATION.—In Norway the laws against cruelty to animals are exceedingly severe. In Christiana, an English workman named Thomas Byrne, had been condemned to eight days' imprisonment on bread and water for unmercifully beating a horse. But, by the laws of the country, and on account of the health of the prisoner, every day's feeding on bread and water is followed by three days' feeding on the ordinary food of the prison, making in reality a confinement of twenty-nine days.

TURKISH TREACHERY.

WHEN we had accomplished about half our journey, we were met by an entire village of fugitive Maronites, who had left their cottages before a menaced invasion of Druses, and, carrying their property, were in full flight towards Beyrout. Horses, cattle, and donkeys were laden with clothes and household furniture, and even the children led sheep and calves.

As the cavalcade approached, great excitement was shown by the troops. Presently, the Christians halted, and all the men of the party, about one hundred, armed with rifles, came to the front.

The Turkish officer then halted his men and rode on to parley. He was met by three or four of the villagers, and a conversation ensued. The officer bid the Christians lay down their arms, and not threaten his troops on the high road.

"Effendim!" exclaimed the Maronites, in one voice, "we do not threaten any one. We are armed to defend ourselves against the Druses. We are the subjects of our Padisha, the Sultan, and are travelling peacefully to Beyrout. Let us, then, go on our way!"

Just then a shout was heard in the distance, and a large body of Druses came galloping over the plain. The Christians then called on the Turks to defend them, and at the same time prepared to resist any attack. The Binbashi now pushed on his men and planted them between the two parties, assuring the Maronites of his protection. The Druses, too, halted when they came within speaking distance.

Then the Binbashi rode up to the Christians, and told them that if they did not yield up their arms forthwith he should at once march on and leave them to their fate, but if the weapons were quietly given up he would escort them to Beyrout. "Better die with our arms than trust to the Turk," cried some young men; but the women screamed at the prospect of a fight, and the older men looked irresolute.

"Down with your arms, my children," said the Binbashi; "fear not: the Druses shall not touch you," and calling a dozen of his men he quietly proceeded to take the weapons of the irresolute Christians. This being done he bid them remain for a while, until he had disarmed also the Druses. He then rode up to the latter, and a parley ensued. I was unquiet, fearful, and intensely distrustful, so I kept mounted, and quietly retired to the rear of the Turks.

"What says the Agha?" remarked one of the soldiers; "are we to escort those Christian pigs to Beyrout?"

"Fear not, Osman," said another; "we shall not turn back: the Agha perhaps, will drive them to Damascus, and we must make them march lighter; they are too heavy for a quick march."

"Aib, shame is it that those unbelieving dogs should be laden with goods, while we, good Mussulmans and children of the Sultan, are half-naked," remarked another.

"Shame, indeed," said his comrade; "we have seen no pay, nothing but our 'tain' (food and allowance in kind, raised from the district in which the troops are quartered,) for two years; but now that the Sultan's firman has arrived we shall all be rich, inshallah."

"Inshallah, inshallah! the firman is a great thing," was echoed amongst the ranks. Just then arose a loud yell from the Druses; they began to move.

Wheeling round the flank of the Turks, who remained motionless, the Druses galloped towards the Maronites, who were huddled together like a flock of sheep, paralyzed by fear. But a few terrible moments

elapsed, and then the two bodies had joined; the armed blood-thirsty Druses were amongst the disarmed Christians hewing with sharp weapons. The loud piercing shrieks of women, the hoarse cries and curses of the men, some of whom wrested the weapons from their assailants, and fought with the frenzy of despair, forming a frightful discord to which I would fain have closed my ears.

In the midst of the horrid scene I heard more than once the Druse cries of "La, la! spare the women!" Many of the latter rushed to the Turks, clung to their feet, and passionately implored mercy; the women found no protection in their sex, but were at once pierced with bayonets, and stripped of all their clothing.

The Turks had not viewed the scene unmoved, but they were regular soldiers, and, obedient to the instincts of discipline, kept their position. As for myself, I rushed to their commander and implored him to interfere, and that failing, I threatened him with the vengeance of his superior officers.

For some time he treated me with a good-humoured contempt, but when my entreaties were turned to threats, he turned upon me, cursed me as a Frank ghiaour, and swore he would cut me down if I uttered another word. The soldiers at last cried out to be led on against the ghiaours.

Anything like fighting had long ceased, the Maronite men were corpses; but there was much plundering going on, with the constant shrieking of women and children. At last arose the cry of "Deen, deen! Mahomed, strike for our religion!" and the Ottoman troops at once charged into the mass of women and children, first firing a volley, which killed and wounded some of the Druses, and then rushing in with the bayonet with as great an élan, with as strong a charge, as if they were carrying a well-defended breach.

A loud, wild shriek, as if from one throat of awful strength, though in reality from many, arose from the mangled mass of defaced humanity; and then nothing was heard but the dull thuds of blunt weapons or the clubbed muskets, while here and there a scream of some one dying hard, or the cry of an unnoticed babe, broke upon the ear; and the Turks were at their old work of pillage, murder, and worse.

I retired, and hid myself behind a rock. My frame shook with agony, and I prayed for death, though I lacked courage to seek what I might have found so easily among those Imperial Ottoman butchers.

We encamped on the field of slaughter. I kept close to my tent and tried to sleep, but the night was made horrible by the beastly pastimes of the troops, in which the officers took part. Two or three soldiers dressed themselves as women, and ran round the camp, pursued by their comrades, amidst shouts of laughter and the most obscene orgies.

A brilliant moon was pouring floods of pale light upon the scene. The mountains around reposed in calm and majestic beauty. It was just a night to tempt the poet to enjoy the ineffable beauties of nature in her sweetest and most sober mood; but the ear was vexed by the loud, hoarse laugh of the soldiers at their gambols.

I went out to see what was passing. They were pelting each other apparently with large large balls; I looked closer, these were human heads, while all around were strewn the naked corpses of Christians, the white skins of men, women and children shining in the moonlight. The night wore on, and the troops lay down to rest, wearied with their sport, and I slept in spite of terror and disgust.—*The Hekim Bashi. By Humphry Sandwith, C.B., D.C.L.*

THE WORD COCKNEY.—In the reign of Edward III., a knight held some land at Cuckney, in Nottinghamshire, free of rent during the reign of the king, on condition of his shoeing the king's palfrey or saddle-horse on each foot, with the king's nails and materials; but if he lamed it he was to give the king another, worth four marks. The Knight of Cuckney attended at the king's stables to perform his duty, when one of the monarch's farriers offered to instruct him how to do it; but in order to save his purse he declined the offer; consequently, by his ignorance he lamed the horse. This was repeated until he paid more marks than the value of the land, by which act of folly the word Cuckney became proverbial, even at court, and every stupid, untutored citizen was called a Cuckney Knight, which was changed to Cockney.

THE WILL OF THE LATE KING OF BAVARIA.—A Munich journal states that the private property of the late King is valued at 4,000,000 gulden, and that his Majesty's will specifies that the whole of this property shall be devoted towards those beneficent objects calculated to promote the common good, which, during the life of the King, formed his chief care. One million will be devoted to the completion, establishment, and endowment of the Maximilian Orphan Institute for the children of servants of the State; a similar sum will be devoted towards the Maximilianum

in like proportions; and finally, a sufficient sum will be invested in order that the scientific undertakings—and especially those relating to history—which were set on foot by his Majesty may be carried out, and that the pensions conferred by him on certain artists, poets, and learned men may be continued. By a codicil to the will his Majesty orders that a mausoleum shall be erected for himself and his consort behind the Theatin church, in such a manner that it can be approached from the church and also from without. The plan of this structure and the order for the payment of the cost are attached to the will. The tomb will be similar to that of Frederick William III. of Prussia and Queen Louise at Charlottenburg.

FACETIÆ.

WHAT is the difference between a sailor and a soldier?—One tars the ropes, and the other pitches his tent.

CONFUSED.—Government Inspector, examining a school not many miles from Canterbury. Question by Inspector: Who was David?—Boy: The son of Jesse, and King of Israel. Inspector: Who was Jesse?—Boy: The Flower of Dumbland.

GRATITUDE TO HEAVEN.—At a religious meeting at Shotley Bridge, the preacher, after descending for some time on the superiority of the brute creation over man, on the score of gratitude, clenching his argument with the following illustration:—"If you look at the hens, they never so much as take a drink of water without raising their bills to heaven in token of gratitude;" and then added, "Oh! that we were all hens!" to which one of the truly edified congregation loudly responded—"Amen!"

COMMON "TATERS" AND COMMENTATORS.—A young minister, in a highly elaborate sermon which he preached, said several times, when giving some new exposition of a passage, "The critics and commentators do not agree with me here." Next morning a poor woman came to see him with something in her apron. She said her husband heard his sermon, and thought it was a very fine one; and as he said "The common taters did not agree with him," he had sent some of the very best Jersey blues.

THE SAW.

"I am come for the saw, sir," said an urchin.
"What saucer?"
"Why, the saw, sir, that you borrowed."
"I borrowed no saucer."
"Sure you did, sir—borrowed our saw, sir."
"Be off; I never borrowed your saucer."
"But you did, sir—there's the saw, sir, now, sir."
"Oh! you want the saw!"

A HINT TO ROYALTY.—An odd trick was, I hear, played the other day at Buckingham Palace. On Thursday morning last the police found on the gateposts large placards containing in bold letters these words, "These commanding premises to be let or sold in consequence of the late occupant declining business." Of course they were at once torn down, and you may imagine the excitement caused in Scotland Yard at this violation of the sanctity of the royal palace. The police on duty in the neighbourhood were doubled, and every precaution was taken to prevent a repetition of the outrage. But on Monday morning the obnoxious placard was once more posted. I believe that there has been no repetition of the affair since; and, indeed, I believe it is almost impossible that there should be, so carefully are these sacred gateposts now guarded.

A GERMAN PUN.—It is not often the Germans attempt a pun, which is singular, seeing the richness of the language, and that there is a good dash of love of fun in their composition. However, Dr. Groth has redeemed their character by a very practical pun. While sending a great quantity of rum to the Prussian soldiers in Schleswig, he says:

"Den Ruhm habt Ihr Guch selbst gepatlickt,
Dass wird Guch der Ruhm geschickt."

Rum is a spirit we all believe, and Ruhm is fame. The translation is very fine; thus:

"The (Ruhm) fame you've won will adorn you,
The Rum I send you will warm you."

A FRENCH officer quarrelling with a Swiss, reproached him with his country's custom of fighting on either side for money, "while we Frenchmen," said he, "fight for honour." "Yes, sir," replied the Swiss, "every one fights for that which he wants most!"

A "GENTLEMANLY" CONTEST.—Two gentlemen of high birth, the one a Spaniard and the other a German, having rendered Maximilian II. many services, they each, for recompense, demanded his natural daughter Helena in marriage. The prince, who entertained equal respect for them both, could not give either the preference; and, after much delay, told them that, from claims they both had to his attention and

regard, he could not give his assent to either of them to marry his daughter, and they must decide it by their own prowess and address; but as he did not wish to risk the loss of either, or both, by suffering them to fight with offensive weapons, he had ordered a large bag to be brought, and he who was successful enough to put his rival into it should obtain his daughter. This strange combat between two gentlemen was in the presence of the whole imperial court, and lasted half-an-hour. At length the Spaniard yielded to the German, Andre Ethard, Baron of Tethard, who, when he had got his adversary into the bag, took him on his back and placed him at the Emperor's feet, and on the following day married the beautiful Helena.

THE FATE OF THE FAT.

A Legendary Lyric after "Banting."

THERE'S a bother, no doubt, in becoming too stout,
Your tailor must double his charge;
And there's always a fuss in a cab or a bus
When admitting a gentleman large.
So Banting, one day, in a bantering way,
Says, "I've suffered from this, but I mean
To get soon rid of that mere superfluous fat,
Which makes us with any one lean."

"I'll get my support from a different sort
Of fare to the one I have had;
Bread, butter, and beer, and potatoes, I fear,
And sugar, are all of them bad."
So by leaving off these, he's no longer obese,
But has thinned himself down to excess;
And the records which state his old weight to be
great,
Point out the new way to be less.

He brings out a book, and the whim of it took;
Disciples he gets by the score;
Each pupil he hath grows thin as a lath,
Though fat he was getting before.
But rumour, unquiet, this change in his diet,
Declared had the patient removed;
When Banting replied, as he never had died,
That the statement remained to be proved.

A very fat friend asked the writer to lend
Him a trifle, this movement to try;
He did it, and then this once fattest of men
Got speedily lost to the eye.
It's supposed that he grew, every day to the view,
Thin and thinner in muscle and joint;
Till just at the time that he came to his prime,
He got to the vanishing point. —Fun.

THE DINNER FOR THE BARON.

One of Henry Fox's jokes was that played off on Mrs. —, who had a great fondness for making the acquaintance of foreigners. He forged a letter of recommendation to her in favour of a German nobleman, the Baron von Seidlitz Powders, whose card was left at her door, and for whom a dinner was immediately planned by Mrs. —, and an invitation sent in form. After waiting a considerable time, and no baron appearing, the dinner was served; but during the second course, a note was brought to the lady of the house with excuses from the baron, who was unexpectedly prevented by the death of his aunt, the Duchess von Edzom Salts, which she read out to the company without any suspicion of the joke, and to the entertainment of her guests, among whom was the facetious author.

"IT'S A WISE FATHER," ETC.

A good story is related of our honest, good-natured old friend S—. "In the course of human events," after having entered into co-partnership, which is generally intended for life, the investments of the firm yielded a profitable return in the shape of a bouncing heir. S— was in raptures, as he was in duty bound to be, and bragged considerably about his boy among his friends. One day, as he was going home to dinner, he was overtaken near his door by a waggish neighbour, whom he invited to see the prodigy.

P— demurred, alleging that he was in somewhat of a hurry—was no judge of the article, etc., but S— would not listen.

"Oh, come in," said he, "and I'll show you something that'll open your eyes; come, come along, don't be afraid."

Thus urged, P— consented, and in they walked. Mrs. S— was apparently absent, but in one corner stood the cradle, in which was ensconced and fast asleep S—'s future hopes.

"There," said he, gently drawing down the quilt, "there's a boy for you!"

Saying which, he gently lifted the slumberer out of his warm nest, and holding him out in both hands, continued:

"Talk about your boys—let 'em get up and beat this. What d'y'e think of him—ain't he a specimen? That'll do pretty well for a new beginner, won't it eh?"

At this moment Mrs. S— entered from a side-room.

"Why, S—!" said she, "that isn't our baby—it's Mrs. So and So's." (the next-door neighbour.) "She wanted me to take care of it a moment while she went out."

S— was completely bewildered.

"Isn't it ours?" he inquired, innocently, looking first at his wife and then at P—, who stood ready to burst with laughter.

"No," said Mrs. S—, "decidedly. 'Here is ours,' she continued, bringing from an adjoining room another infant wonder."

"Well I declare," said S—, looking first at one and then at the other, "who'd have thought I could have made such a mistake?"

AN ASTONISHED INDIVIDUAL.

One day this winter, a tall, raw-boned fellow entered the Quincey Market, in Boston, and seeing a large hog on exhibition, was mightily struck with it.

"I swear," said he, "that's a great hog; I swear I never saw a finer looking one in my life; I swear—what short legs he's got!—I swear—"

"Look here, friend," said a little dry looking individual, trotting up, "you must not swear so."

"I swear I should like to know why?" said the hard swearer, with an ominous look.

"Because," said the little man, "swearing is against the law, and I shall have to commit you," drawing himself up.

"Are you a justice of the peace?" inquired the swearer.

"I am."

"Well, I swear," said the profane one, "I am more astonished at that than I was about the hog."

AN AMERICAN QUESTION AND ANSWER.—What kind of mutton would best suit President Lincoln's taste?—Why, "The South-down," to be sure!—Fun.

DISTRESSING OCCURRENCE.—The young woman whose modesty was so much shocked the other day at the mention of a bare idea, has been detected in the act of concealing the naked truth under a false hood. —Fun.

THE RIGHT MAN.—It is rumoured that the Post-office department is to be re-organized, and that the important post of secretary is to be filled by Mr. Cobden. A capital appointment, for he proved himself a man of letters in his correspondence with Delane. —Fun.

CASUAL CONVERSATIONS.

(Picked up by our Own "Mouchard.")

Brown (log): "Jones, what is the German Diet?"
Jones: "Properly speaking it is a Parliament of all the German States, though at present, with the exception of Austria and Prussia, who are trying to make a meal of Denmark, the Diet of the rest of the States is 'humble pie.'"
Brown: "Ah, that accounts for their being so crusty with England."

Jones: "So the English Opera closed last week; the speculation not having turned out a success."

Brown: "You're wrong—it has turned out a success."

Jones: "How so?"

Brown: "Thus: Success has been turned completely out of the theatre, empty benches and paper come in, and the house closes."

Brown: "Is the Alabama a clipper?"

Jones: "Of course she is. But why do you ask?"

Brown: "Well, I thought she must be a lighter, as we always hear of her burning all the ships she takes."

Jones: "So Parliament won't let London be cut up by the railway companies. But I know who will be."

Brown: "Who?"

Jones: "Why, the shareholders, of course, by the decision." —Fun.

WANTED, AN EXPLANATION.

SIR,—I am a moral man, an Englishman, and in trade. You will, therefore, understand that I go to church. I read my Times, although I do not understand all the articles of that noble paper. I say noble, sir, because I hear it is a great property, and anything that pays must be noble. I hear your periodical is in a similar condition; and I, therefore, address myself to you. Insolvency I regard as immoral, and all connection with it is to be avoided by every man who pays his way and looks after his own interests. At least, such are my ideas. They may be right, or they may be wrong. I think them the former.

Now, sir, I have often remarked in the parliamentary reports, which I also carefully read every day, the following expression on the introduction of a new member:—"Mr. — took the oaths and his seat." Good heavens! sir (if I may be allowed the

expression, which, as a moral man, I own is strong, can this be really true? Blasphemy is punishable by Act of Parliament, and yet our legislators, on entering upon their parliamentary functions, commence their duties by infringing the laws they themselves are called upon to sanction. And not one infraction only, but an unlimited number, for the report invariably says "oaths!" And this is called a Christian country!

Sir, as a vestryman, I know to what lengths freedom of speech will go in a debate. Did not Jones, a malignant, crawling reptile, who always makes a point of opposing any necessary proposal for retrenchment I may make, such as watering the paupers' soup, or reducing the doctor's salary—did not Jones, I say, but yesterday, term me "an imbecile screw?" But swear!—no! never! Any man attempting such a thing in our vestry would be put down, sir, in a way that would astonish him. Yet in Parliament it is not only tolerated, but even regarded as a necessary proceeding.

This, sir, demands an explanation, and I call upon you to give it.—Yours sternly,

JOSIAH MUGGINS.

[Note by the Editor.—Our correspondent is a donkey.]—*Fun*.

THE TAX COLLECTOR.—This enemy of the human race is so universally hated that now and then, having got in all the rates of his parish, he pockets them and bolts to a clime where he may escape the black looks of the dunned. By so doing he also avenges himself on the parish, for the rate-payers have to make up his defalcations, and pay the rates twice over. Let those injured people, therefore, look with favour on Gladstone's Bill for the Collection of Taxes. In that it is provided that when this duty is transferred to the Inland Revenue, parishes shall cease to be liable for the deficiencies arising from default or failure of collectors. This is a step in the rate direction!—*Fun*.

Oh, indeed!—Here's an important paragraph: "The following gentlemen have been added to the National Shakespeare Committee: Cyrus Field, Esq., New York; J. P. Lasanta, Esq., Cadiz; Jose E. Ivion, Esq., Jerez; and N. F. Palmer, Esq." Mr. Smith will surely be the next adhesion announced, and probably the names of Messrs. Brown, Jones, and Robinson will be published in due time. In the meanwhile, we may be pardoned for asking who on earth these gentlemen are? and what they have done that such a solemn announcement of their admission to the Irrational Meddle and Muddle Association should be made?—*Fun*.

STATISTICS.

The imports of bacon and hams for 1861, 1862, 1863 were, in cwt., 515,953, 1,345,694, and 1,877,813. Eggs are also brought into this country in enormous quantities, the numbers being for the three years 203,000,000, 232,000,000, and 267,000,000 respectively.

POLICE AND POPULATION.—The strength of the county police force to every 1,000 of the population of the subjoined counties is calculated to be as follows:—Of Bedfordshire, at 0·67; of Buckinghamshire, at 0·74; of Cambridgeshire, at 0·82; of Derbyshire, at 0·56; of the Isle of Ely, at 0·94; of Essex (with Harwich and Saffron Walden), at 0·84; of Hertfordshire, at 0·65; of Huntingdonshire (with Godmanchester and Huntingdon), at 0·74; of Leicestershire, at 0·57; of Lincolnshire, at 0·78; of Norfolk (with Thetford), at 0·70; of Northamptonshire, at 0·61; of Nottinghamshire (with Retford), at 0·52; of Oxfordshire, at 0·67; of Rutlandshire, at 0·86; of Shropshire (with Oswestry and Wenlock), at 0·50; of Staffordshire (with Stafford and Tamworth), at 0·66; of East Suffolk (with Beccles, Eye and Orford), at 0·63; of West Suffolk (with Bury St. Edmunds), at 0·77; of Warwickshire, at 0·87; and of Worcestershire (with Evesham), at 0·67. The number of known thieves and suspected persons at large in each of these police districts was as follows:—Bedfordshire, 687; Buckinghamshire, 651; Cambridgeshire, 315; Derbyshire, 967; Isle of Ely, 866; Essex, 1,096; Hertfordshire, 1,316; Huntingdonshire, 85; Leicestershire, 457; Lincolnshire, 1,337; Norfolk, 1,581; Northamptonshire, 1,116; Oxfordshire, 964; Rutlandshire, 65; Shropshire, 297; Staffordshire, 2,691; East Suffolk, 576; West Suffolk, 394; Warwickshire, 1,014; and Worcestershire, 825.

Too Many Excuses.—Craggs has been with the princess, and makes many professions and tells many lies. He says he was not for taking the children from the princess. He said the quarrel had been made by under-servants, who had reported abundance of things, which they said were true; that for the ministers, he

would answer that they had never done any such thing; that their complaint against the prince was, that he spoiled and opposed the king's affairs; and they used to say to the king that the prince's friends were like a battalion that broke through all their measures: "And perhaps," says he, "I myself have been one of the foremost in saying it, it being true." She said, "I was told you had condescended so low as to call me a b—h;" at which he began a volley of oaths and curses of the falseness of the assertion, for so long a time, and with so much vehemence, that she said to him, "Fie, Mr. Craggs; you renounce God like a woman that's caught in the fact." He talked of sending the C. home, but was not clear in the manner, nor anything.—*Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714-1720.*

A NOBLE ANNOUNCEMENT.—The Rev. E. R. Taylor has nobly announced that he is prepared to make arrangements to receive all those children who have been left orphans by the late catastrophe, in the valley of the Don, and to feed, clothe, and educate them.

THE ADMIRALTY AND INVENTORS.—The Admiralty having been of late constantly importuned by inventors to adopt plans by the application of which an enemy's ship—nay, a whole fleet—might, with its guns, stores, and crew, be blown out of the water, only, subsequently, to be swallowed up by the sea, their lordships have now determined to appoint a committee to which all such terrible schemes shall be referred.

TO-MORROW.

TO-MORROW—'tis an idle sound,
Tell me of no such dreary thing—
A new land whither I am bound,
After strange wandering.

What care I if bright blossoms there
Unfold, and sunny be the field,
If laden boughs in summer air
Their pulpy fruitage yield;

While deck to-day my present bower,
Upon my own loved mountain-shade,
The azure periwinkle flower,
And violet deep-deyed?

Tell me not of to-morrow,—calm
In his great heart I would abide:
Who fills my present hour with balm,
And trust whatever betide.

A.

GEMS.

SOME hearts, like primroses, open most beautifully in the shadows of life.

HEADS are excellent things, but it is better to be a man of one good head than a monster of seven.

He who gains the victory over great insults is often overpowered by the smallest; so it is with our sorrows.

EVERY dewdrop, every raindrop, has a whole heaven within it, and so has every pure and high human heart.

It is beautiful, in a lovely day, to see the soft, sweet clouds rove like lambs through the blue pastures of the heavens.

MAN carries more blood in his veins than any other animal, and it had better settle into his soul than into his brow and heart.

WAR has the same effect upon nations as upon individuals. It destroys the feeble and strengthens the strong.

IDEAL AND REAL.

In looking at existence and duties afar off, as we do when young, our imagination plays so prominent a part that the ideal becomes almost as true to us as the real ever will or can be. We

Sleep and dream that life is beauty,
We wake and find that life is duty.

That is, we dream, imagining life full of truth, nobility, and goodness; we wake, and find very little of these things. We raise an ideal standard, as millions have done before us and as millions will do after us; we expect all things to reach that standard, when they never will and never can. It takes a long time, does it not, for us to get this lofty ideal standard of ours lowered? for lower it we must; we cannot expect perfection of imperfect beings, for with us there is no perfection. It takes a long time to disenthroned Fancy and seat Reality in her stead. It takes a long time to disenchant us of our dreams; those dreams idealize what are "only common affairs" after all. We often think of human life as something grand, epic-like in its aims and struggles, whereas in a human life there is but one majestic event—that which terminates all its petty struggles. Yet, much as we idealize life, we can never make an epic poem of it, there is so much in it that is contemptible and wrong—so much that is

beneath the dignity of an epic. And yet, mistaken as we are, I think it is better for us that we can idealize common things, and make epics out of common lives, and heroes out of common men. If we could not, ours would be a bitter life, and little worth all the tears it costs us. And let the time come, as it will, when we will smile or sneer at the first twenty years of our existence, we can still paint life all Fancy's gala colours, and dream that there is only beauty in store for us in future.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE "KEARSAGE" ENLISTMENTS.—Six men have been tried at the Cork assizes for enlisting on board the Federal sloop of war Kearsage. They pleaded guilty, and were required to enter into their own sureties to appear for judgment when called on.

POST-OFFICE PROMOTIONS.—Mr. Scudamore succeeds Mr. Tilley as Assistant-Secretary and colleague of Mr. Frederick Hill at the General Post-office. Mr. Scudamore was the gentleman in the Accountant's-office to whom the conduct of the Post-office Savings Banks was entrusted, and who compiled the report upon their progress and success.

THE NEW YORK "CENTRAL PARK."—More than 79,000 trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants were planted in New York Central Park last year. The carriage-drive now completed is about eight miles in length; bridle-road five miles, and walks twenty miles. Over 4,000,000 persons visited the park in 1863, and in one day over 8,000 carriages entered the drives.

AN INCIDENT AT COURT ON THE RECONCILIATION OF THE KING AND PRINCE.—I was called by the princess into the closet to seal a letter to the archbishop, who was entirely kept out of this. I wished the prince joy and comfort of what had been doing. He embraced and kissed me five or six times, and with his usual heartiness when he means sincerely. He said he knew the part I took in all his good or ill fortune, and he knew my good heart so well he was sure I was pleased with this. The princess burst into a loud laugh, and said, "So! I think you two always kiss upon great occasions." All the town, feignedly or unfeignedly transported. I kissed Lord Cowper at coming home; said to him, "Well, thank God, your head is your own, and that's more than one could be sure of two months ago."—*Diary of Countess Cowper.*

THE HEATHEN AT HOME.—A boy of eleven years of age was called as a witness at an inquest which was held at West Bromwich on Wednesday. Before tendering an oath the coroner examined the boy as follows:—How old are you? Eleven years of age last Friday.—Have you ever read the Bible? No, sir.—Have you ever been to school? Yes, sir, once.—Have you never been told where you will go if you tell lies? No, sir.—Have you never heard where the wicked people go to? No, sir.—How long did you go to school? Three or four months, sir.—Did you never hear the Bible read? No, sir.—Did you never hear the name of God? No, sir (great sensation).—Do you know what an oath means? No, sir.—Nor where you will go if you don't tell the truth? No, sir.

BUSINESS RULES.

THE following seasonable and excellent rules are for young men commencing business:—

The world estimates men by their success in life, and, by general consent, success is evidence of superiority.

Never, under any circumstances, assume a responsibility you can avoid consistently with your duty to yourself and others.

Base all your actions upon a principle of right; preserve your integrity of character, and in doing this, never reckon on the cost.

Remember that self-interest is more likely to warp your judgment than all other circumstances combined; therefore, look well to your duty when your interest is concerned.

Never make money at the expense of your reputation.

Be neither lavish nor niggardly; of the two avoid the latter. A mean man is universally despised, but public favour is a stepping-stone to preferment; therefore, generous feelings should be cultivated.

Say but little—think much and do more.

Let your expenses be such as to leave a balance in your pocket. Ready money is a friend in need.

Keep clear of the law; for, even if you gain your case, you are generally a loser.

Avoid borrowing and lending.

Wine-drinking and smoking cigars are bad habits; they impair the mind and pocket, and lead to a waste of time.

Never relate your misfortunes, and never grieve over what you cannot prevent.

CONTENTS.

THE BONDAGE OF BRAN-	705	THE SHAKESPEARE TER-	
NON	705	CENTENARY COMMEMO-	718
HOLLYWELL CAVE	709	RATION	
BURIED ALIVE	710	MRS. LARKALL'S BOARD-	
DIGGING UP SEEDS	714	ING SCHOOL	721
WORKS	714	SELF-MADE	725
WORKS AND HER MASTER	715	FINE FLORE	728
A FAIRY PICTURE	717	THE SECRET CHAMBER	729
FRAGS IN A LONDON		SCIENCE	732
THEATRE	717	A GHOST STORY	733
THE RELIGION OF THE		TURKISH TEACHESS	733
SPANIARDS	717	FACTILE	734
HOW THE OLD EARLE OF		STATISTICS	735
NORTHUMBERLAND DIED	718	TO-MORROW	735
THE FAMOUS DUCHESSE OF		GEMS	735
GORDON	718	MISCELLANEOUS	735

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

O. J. COWELL.—If you wish to marry suitably, marry your equal.

F. FREEMAN.—We do not intend to publish the tale in *THE LONDON READER*.

ALPHA AND OMEGA.—The index to the 7 DAYS' JOURNAL is in preparation, and will be published shortly.

LOUIS N. R.—The verses to "Fate" are too long to suit our columns; they are therefore declined with thanks.

S. MCCURDY.—"The Young Girl from the Country" commenced in No. 24 of *THE LONDON READER*, and ended in No. 48.

CONSTANT READER.—We gave a very excellent recipe for improving the hair in No. 48.

IGNORAMUS.—There is no absolute rule; a man may be married in any costume he chooses to wear. Evening dress, however, is generally worn by bridegrooms.

COPYRIGHT LAW.—You may take extracts of a reasonable length, from any literary work, duly acknowledging the same; but you must not copy engravings. A case in point has been recently under discussion in the columns of a morning contemporary.

SANDY.—Write to the Secretary of the General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand. Your handwriting would certainly qualify you in that respect for a situation in the department.

OPTICS.—We have no knowledge of any work on the subject which supplies information on all the minute practical details you specify. You might, however, consult with advantage Dr. Lardner's "Museum of Science and Art."

J. D.—Send the names, stating also the counties to which the families belong, to any heraldic office, and if entitled to armorial bearings, the costs will be supplied.

A. Z. Q.—Prices in Australia have of late undergone great depreciation, especially as regards live stock; still for £500 you might be able to stock a tolerable sheep-run. Of course you must be guided by circumstances in the colony as to the choice of the best locality.

CONSTANT READER.—Powdered sugar, four pounds; citric or tartaric acid, one ounce; essence of lemon, two drachms; mix well. Two or three teaspoonfuls of this will be sufficient to make a very agreeable glass of lemonade.

ISABELLE.—The Christian name "Edward" is Saxon, and means "happy keeper"; the name of "William" comes from the German, and signifies "defending many." The handwriting is peculiar, but we like it exceedingly.

LETTY.—The word haze in reference to the colour of eyes, is probably derived from the Spanish and Portuguese word *azul*, which means blue.

JANE Y.—The result of your "foolish experiment" should prove to you the importance of "a trifle." But in fact there is no such thing—

"Think nought a trifle, though it small appear,
Small sands make mountains; moments make the year;
And trifles—life."

A. SPENNER.—We apprehend the reason why so few marriages are happy, is chiefly because young ladies spend their time in learning how to make nets rather than cages.

M. STEEL.—It is not merely the supplying of means and the giving of commands that constitutes a master of a family; but prudence, equanimity of behaviour, with a readiness to protect and cherish those who are dependent on him, that entitle a man to be regarded as the real master of a family.

E. H. K. who is just eighteen years of age, the eldest son of a gentleman, desires to correspond with some young lady, who must be good-looking. He is 5½ ft in height, has dark brown hair and fair complexion.

N. P. C.—Your question argues a very limited acquaintance with mankind; for otherwise you would know that there are good and bad in all nations. Whether the French as a people are superior to the English, or vice versa, is a question utterly unworthy of discussion—both nations stand abreast in the forefront of civilization, and each possesses admirable qualities peculiarly its own.

MORTIER.—It is impossible to obtain the statistical information which you seek. No returns of the comprehensive and yet minute nature you desire have ever been obtained. They will be supplied, no doubt, when we shall have a cosmopolitan census of the civilized world, but—not till then.

THECKLA.—Good temper is, no doubt, a most admirable quality; and yet we have somewhere met the reflection that those who possess unusual easiness and softness of temper, have seldom very noble or nice sensations of soul.

AGATHA.—As to whether you will grow any taller, we cannot give you much hope; but you may certainly reduce yourself in size. Every person who is stout, and wishes his (or her) "too, too solid flesh would melt," should follow the course of treatment pursued by Mr. Banting, who by a judicious system of dieting reduced himself recently from the dimensions of a two hundred pounder to the weight of only one hundred and fifty-six pounds. Mr. Banting, however, did not place himself on an anchorite's allowance as to diet; but kept, on the contrary, an excellent table. He indulged in fish, poultry, and game; and drank claret, sherry, and Madeira. But he did not eat potatoes, bread, butter, or

sugar, nor drink milk or beer. And by this scale of diet, from a painful state of obesity, Mr. Banting became thin enough to enable him to cry out joyfully that he had conquered corpulency. Try the Bantingian method; you will find the philosophy of fatness fully discussed in a pamphlet by Mr. Banting, lately published.

GREAT EASTER.—Having complied with the company's request to report any instance of incivility or misconduct on the part of their servants, and having obtained no redress, you should proceed by summons before a police magistrate against the station-master who committed the alleged assault.

G. H. C.—The more perfect the nature, the more weak, the more wrong, the more absurd, may be the "something" in a person's character. To explain the paradox, we must observe that if a mind is sensitive and susceptible, false impressions in education will have a bad effect in proportion to that susceptibility, and consequently may produce an evil which a stupid and insensible nature might have avoided.

D. L. L.—You should not judge from appearances that the lady is indifferent to you:

"Love teaches cunning even to Innocence;
And where he gets possession, his first work
Is to dig deep within a heart, and there
Lie hid; and like a miser in the dark,
To feast alone."

H. H. O.—The difference between happiness and wisdom consists in this—he that thinks himself the happiest man, really is so; whilst he that thinks himself the wisest, is generally the greatest fool.

ENKELINE is of the medium height, and twenty-four years of age, has loving, dark brown eyes, with rippling chestnut hair, a small mouth, with rosy lips, and a good set of teeth, is very domesticated and industrious; and with these advantages and qualifications thinks she would make a dear little wife, notwithstanding that she possesses no money. Possibly some of our bachelor readers may think so too.

NORAH and **LAURA**, two sisters, living much retired, considered by their friends very good-looking, are anxious to be wooed and wed. "Norah" is dark, has clear complexion, is tall and slight, has expressive blue eyes, is very domesticated, and excels in music and painting. "Laura" is tall and fair, has deep, violet eyes, clear but pale complexion, can play, and speak French, is domesticated, and would make a good wife. "Norah" is twenty, and "Laura" is twenty-one.

LUCY D.—The lines—
"Vous ne voulez m'aimer?
Eh, bien, ne m'aimez pas!
J'en aurai du regret.
Mais je n'en mourrai pas"
(which are not in the choicest Parisian), may be rendered into English thus:—
"You say you cannot love me?
Ah, well, I'm quite content,
And though that love I'd value,
Its loss I'll not repeat."

P. COLTON.—Most assuredly not. In all governments there must of necessity be both the law and the sword; laws without the armed power would give us not liberty, but licentiousness; and armed power without laws would produce not merely subjection, but slavery.

H. J. FULLER.—Those who in the common course of the world call themselves your friends, or whom, according to the ordinary notions of friendship, you may think such will never, be assured, tell you of all your faults, still less of your weaknesses. But, on the contrary, being more anxious to make you their friend than to prove themselves yours, they gloss over both, and are in truth not sorry for either.

CATHERINE PHILLIPS.—Very few men, indeed, are calculated for that close intimacy which you call Platonic friendship. A man in that position is in a state of progression; and after having passed through a given amount of experience and afforded sufficient evidence of his merit, the sentiment takes a new title, and becomes love.

FRANK (a widower of 32, who has two little boys, with a good home, and is in a fair position, having £230 per annum income) would like to meet with an affectionate, domesticated and educated lady, between the age of twenty-four and thirty-two, whom he is quite sure he could make very happy as a wife. Beauty and money would both be valued, but would be secondary to affection, amiability and industry.

MABEL CARWARDINE.—We would willingly give you our advice and opinion of the circumstance that you letter refers to, except for the trifling circumstance that you have omitted to enclose them. If you forward them, we will tell you frankly what we think of their merits; but in the meantime we may observe that we do not think you need disquiet yourself with apprehensions regarding their "stupidity," as you term it; judging from your letter, we should not expect to find your verses deserving of such severe criticism.

D. B. wishes to meet with some "Celebs in search of a wife." It is not necessary that the gentleman should possess money, as "D. B." has an income of her own, and also regards looks as a secondary consideration. "D. B." is eighteen, and tall; has light hair and eyes, and would prove an affectionate wife to a man who is fond of his home. *Cartes-de-visite* to be exchanged.

BRIGHTON P.—To remove "superficial hair" is by no means easy of achievement; most remedies are at least doubtful, and some prescriptions even dangerous. But you may try the following plan, which is safe.—The hairs should be perseveringly plucked up by the roots, and the skin, having been washed twice a day with warm soft water, without soap, should be treated with the following wash, commonly called milk of roses. Beat four ounces of sweet almonds in a mortar, and add half an ounce of white sugar during the process; reduce the whole to a paste by pounding; then add, in small quantities at a time, eight ounces of rose water. The emulsion thus formed should be strained through a fine cloth, and the residue again pounded, while the strained fluid should be bottled in a large stopped phial. To the paste mass in the mortar add half an ounce of sugar and eight ounces of rose water, and strain again. This process must be repeated three times. To the thirty-two ounces of fluid add twenty grains of the bichloride of mercury, dissolved in two ounces of alcohol, and shake the mixture for five minutes. The fluid should be applied with a towel, immediately after washing, and the skin gently rubbed with a dry cloth till perfectly dry. Wilson, in his work on "Healthy Skin," writes as follows:—"Substances are sold

by the perfumers called depilatories, which are represented as having the power of removing hair. But the hair is not destroyed by these means, the root and that part of the shaft implanted within the skin still remain, and are ready to shoot up with increased vigour as soon as the depilatory is withdrawn. The effect of the depilatory is the same, in this respect as the razor, and the latter is, unquestionably, the better remedy. It must not, however, be imagined that depilatories are negative remedies, and that, if they do no permanent good, they are at least harmless; that is not the fact; they are violent irritants, and require to be used with the utmost caution. After all, the safest depilatory is a pair of tweezers and patience."

MAUDE R. who is a brunette of nineteen, is anxious to give her hand and heart to some gentleman who is tall and dark, and possesses a "comfortable" income. "Maude" is about 5 ft 6 in. in height, has dark brown hair, dark eyes, and dark complexion; has received a good education, is domesticated, and has private property of £100 a year. References and *cartes* to be exchanged. (Writing ladylike, but would be better with more care.)

QUI DORT, DINE.—The difference between rising every morning at six and at eight in the course of forty years amounts to 29,300 hours, or three years, one hundred and twenty-one days, and sixteen hours—equivalent to eight hours a day for exactly ten years. So that rising at six will be the same as if ten additional years of life (a weighty consideration) were given you, in which to cultivate your mind, and despatch your business. Think of it.

VERMOREL.—Alchemy was formerly more than a "popular credulity" for Newton and Boyle were among the earnest inquirers into it. Since the discovery of totally different substances, composed of the same elements, which modern chemistry has established, our chemical philosophers begin to recognize the possibility of the metals being transmutable. Many suspect them to be compound bodies; and it has been stated that oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon, perhaps even hydrogen and carbon alone, are the components of all matter. Faraday says that the doctrine of the alchemists on the transmutation of metals, is no longer opposed to the analogies of science; the inference being, that some day some lucky savan will perhaps succeed in producing gold from his crucible.

SOUTH CAMP.—Every part of the body the office of which is vital, not simply mechanical, passes through alternate periods of rest and action. The heart pauses after each pulsation, and every breath we draw is followed by a period during which the nerves and muscles of respiration repose before they are again aroused into action. The heart acts and rests seventy or eighty times, and often more, in a minute; the voluntary muscles can be made to maintain their action for several minutes, and the organs of sense and brain for longer periods. But in all cases the due proportion of rest to action must be maintained, or the health of the part inevitably suffers. Every-day experience teaches us that this is true, and physiology will show you why it must be so.

N. J. W.—The tear of a loving girl, says an old book, is like a dewdrop on the rose, but that on the cheek of a wife is a drop of poison. Try to appear cheerful and contented, and your husband will probably be so; and when you have made him happy you will become so yourself, not in appearance but reality. The skill required is not so great. Nothing flatters a man so much as the happiness of his wife—he is always proud of himself as the source of it. As soon as you are cheerful, you will be lively and alert, and every moment will afford you an opportunity of letting fall an agreeable word. Your education, which gives you an immense advantage, will greatly assist you, and your sensitiveness will become the noblest gift that Nature has bestowed on you, when it shows itself in affectionate assiduity, and stamps in every action a soft, kind and tender character instead of wasting itself in secret repining.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"Wild Rose" would be most happy to correspond with "Wyndell Moleyn"; is eighteen years of age, has light, curling hair, blue eyes, and is at her ease either in the drawing-room or kitchen, being thoroughly domesticated. "Rosebud" would be happy to correspond matrimonially with "Xorxes" is seventeen years of age, of middle height, has dark grey eyes, sunburn hair and good figure, has received a good, plain education, with a few accomplishments, and is of a lively disposition—"G. C. B." (who gives no personal particulars) would be happy to hear further from "Margaret M. C. M."—"M. J. Q." wishes to correspond with "Wyndell Moleyn"; is of the middle height, has dark hair and hazel eyes, and is considered good-looking—"Arthur" intimates that he is impatiently awaiting a reply from "Kate"—"G. W. D." begs, in reply to "Polly G." to state that he will be most happy to correspond—"Progress R." would like to correspond with "Wyndell Moleyn"; is tall and fair, with blue eyes, good temper, and considered good-looking—"Charles de Courcy" offers himself to "Margaret M. C. M." and says that he is of amiable disposition, tall, good-looking, and of gentlemanly address; has been an officer, R.N., is thirty-six years of age, and will be most happy to exchange *cartes-de-visite*—"Lizzie Neville" is desirous of exchanging *cartes* with "Charles Stuart." She is not very tall, rather dark, considered pretty, is just seventeen, and of very good family—"Katie Marston" will be glad to exchange *cartes* with "Frank Osborne." She is tall, a brunette, considered good-looking, eighteen years of age, and of very respectable family.

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